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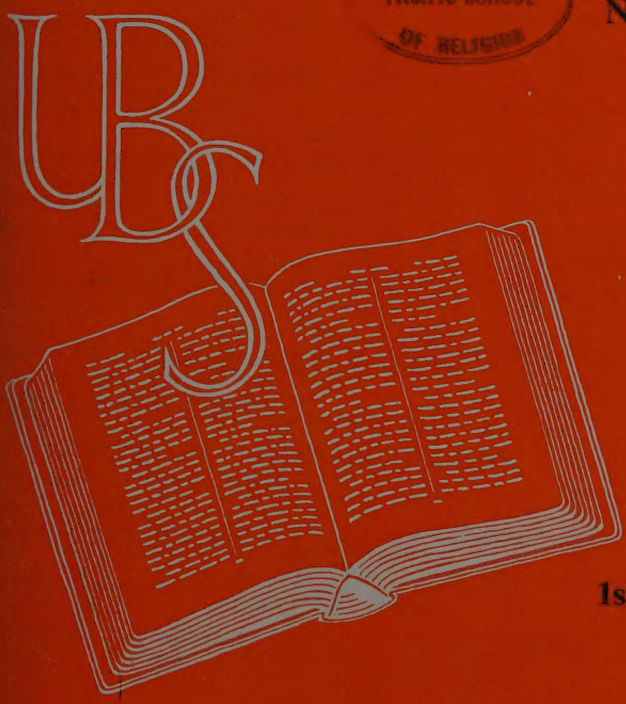

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UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES

BULLETIN

FIRST QUARTER - 1957

CONTENTS

		Page
Thoughts on South America	NORMAN J. COCKBURN	2
The Bible Society in Bolivia	TOM HUDSPITH	6
The Significance of Bible Society work in Peru and Ecuador	JOHN H. TWENTYMAN	9
Scripture Distribution in Columbia and Venezuela	KENNETH BYSTROM	12
Scripture Distribution in Chile	DAVID C. BRACKENRIDGE	15
The Work of the Central American Agency	J. W. LIMKEMANN	18
Bible Translation in Latin America	EUGENE A. NIDA	21
In the Steps of St. Thomas	WILLIAM C. SOMERVILLE	25
Statement from Conference of the Bible Society Secretaries and Agents at work in South-East Asia		28
News from all the World		32
Audio-Visual Aid Notes		44
Personalia		48

With four-page Supplement of Illustrations from Africa, as samples from the U.B.S./B.F.B.S. Photographic Library

Thoughts on South America

Norman J. Cockburn

FOR EIGHT MONTHS it was my recent happy task and privilege to travel around South America on behalf of the British and Foreign Bible Society and the American Bible Society. I owe a great debt of gratitude to Messrs. Bystrom, Siciliani, Young, Twentyman, Hudspith, Brackenridge, Alves, Morris and the late Dr. Turner, for being each in his turn my host, guide, interpreter and friend. In addition, I can never repay adequately the kindness of at least fifty missionary families who gave me hospitality in Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil. It is to these that I owe whatever small understanding I have come to possess in regard to South America.

I have been asked to write down some thoughts about the situation in South America as that affects the work of the Bible Societies. It would not be possible for one who has spent only a short time in each country to provide any very original solution to the special problems found there. I have decided, therefore, to collect from notes kept during the journey the verbatim conversations with one or two missionaries and friends who have in some cases spent their entire lives in the field and are, therefore, qualified to speak. Here and there, where I think it might be helpful, I shall add my own comments.

General religious situation

My first talk was with one who had seen long service in South America. "Tell me", I began, "how you picture the general religious situation in South America, especially in regard to the circulation of the Bible". He replied as follows: "No judgments can ever be passed on things until we are in possession of facts. The relevant facts which govern the present-day religious situation in South America are mainly historical, political and psychological". I wonder how these three things connect together? "It becomes clear after we have reviewed each. I should say the essential historical background which must be understood is a simple one. After the year 1500 Europeans, mainly Spanish and Portuguese, arrived in South America, and in a short time conquered most of the original population. They brought with them Roman Catholicism and gradually over a period of three hundred years that became established in the sense of rooting itself deeply into the culture of South America. Pioneer work in translating parts of the Bible into Indian languages, such as Quechua, Aymara and others, was undertaken, especially by religious Orders such as the Jesuits. The problem of educating the Indians to a degree of literacy was, however, found difficult, and the project of Scriptural circulation was not pressed. A new phase in South American history began shortly after the year 1800, when the present-day independent sovereign Republics began to emerge.

"In liberating themselves from the control of Spain and Portugal these States called upon the help of other European countries, such as Britain. When later on they set up their liberal Governments they introduced clauses in their

constitutions affirming the right of religious liberty. One of the results of this was the beginning of the modern Protestant missions in South America. The Bible Societies had an interesting part to play in this movement. In one sense they pioneered it. For instance, in connection with the British and Foreign Bible Society, few investigations are so interesting as that of reading the Annual Reports published during the early part of the 19th century. Again and again these refer to the travels and labours of a remarkable man, the Rev. James Thomson, who was the Society's agent at that time. When one reads of his travels through Argentina, Chile, Peru and Venezuela, one is amazed at the amount of encouragement given to his projects of Bible circulation by Roman Catholic clergy and governmental authorities in the South America of those days. Thomson was made a citizen of Argentina; he was commissioned by General San Martin, the liberator of Chile, to reorganise the educational system of national independent Chile. In Colombia he established a Colombian Bible Society which affirmed that there was nothing contrary to the Roman Catholic religion in circulating the Scriptures in the vernacular tongue. The door seemed open to an alliance between the newly-formed liberal governments and the newly-arrived modern Protestantism, eager to present the Bible as the foundation of a reformed Christianity. The cold facts of history, however, are that this opportunity was never effectively realised. Slowly the South American States, though always, in greater or lesser degree, sympathetic to Protestantism, none the less related themselves quite definitely to the Roman Catholic Church. To-day these relationships vary from the closeness of a virtual Concordat in Colombia, to the distance of virtual separation in Uruguay. The governments retained in their constitution the principle of religious freedom, but through their alliance with the Roman Catholic Church curbed it in various degrees.

"Throughout the nineteenth century, evangelical missions were set up throughout all South America, numbering in all about one hundred distinct evangelical organisations, having their headquarters or bases for the most part in Britain or the United States. They mainly sought to reproduce the traditional Protestant churches, such as Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian and Congregationalist. Practically without exception they have taken the Bible as the foundation of their theology, the substance of their preaching and from it they have derived the tone of their worship.

"Throughout this present century the most striking feature of evangelical development has been the increasing significance of unattached groups, usually called Faith Missions, which have entered the field. These have been increasing numerically at a rate which, for the most part, exceeds that of the traditional Protestant missions.

"Such, in broad outline, is the basic situation which has been inherited and which dominates and shapes events to-day".

The above facts are, of course, known to everyone who has lived in South America. My own impression is that the gulf between the Roman Catholic and the evangelical bodies is becoming wider. Since these two bodies disagree with regard to the place which the Bible should occupy in Christianity, there is absent that single united religious purpose expressing the will of religious authority and commanding the response of the whole population, which alone could open wide all gates to the unfettered circulation of the Scriptures. The future of evangelical religion in South America will continue to be difficult.

It is true to say that during the course of its history in this world the human race journeys through different climates of thought. There have been times when the vast majority of human beings have been basically concerned with the things of religion, when belief in God and conduct related to that belief have been the factors ultimately shaping human life and all other spheres. To-day, throughout most of the world, actual disbelief in God or nominal attachment to religious forms is more determinative of human conduct. We think of the great effect which atheistic communism has undoubtedly had upon millions of the human race. Generally speaking the atmosphere of the times in which we live is political rather than religious. This is true of most of Asia and Africa, where the awakening nationalisms are the factors which most powerfully stir the motions and grip the intellectual assent of the majority of Asiatics and Africans to-day. It is true of Europe, which almost for fifty years now has been in some condition of civil war over matters which are mainly political. It is true also of South America, though in a manner different from the Asiatic, African and European situations.

Relationship of religious to political life

South America is a region in which the European civilisation and religion were superimposed from the 16th century onwards. Owing to the large scale, however, on which inter-marriage between the conquering Spaniards and Portuguese and the conquered Indians took place, a population was produced which felt both the indigenous Indian and the superimposed European culture as parts of its inmost being.

None the less, the process of creating political structures, which produce harmoniously adjusted populations, has proved to be long and arduous. Revolutions have always been part of South American history during recent centuries. This ever-recurrent preoccupation with political problems has prevented South Americans from possessing adequately a stable religious outlook. In the past the Roman Catholic Church has found this problem just as difficult as the evangelical bodies are finding it to-day. Converts to a firm religious faith are usually individuals or minorities. The majority tend to be more concerned with government than with Gospel.

In this very situation, however, the prophetic mission of the evangelical churches has a profound significance in life for South America. The more the Bible as a whole is circulated and assimilated, the more will the *individual* outlook be widened and deepened. There is a sincerity about evangelical religion in South America which expresses the direct working of God Himself.

Position of Faith Missions

One other conversation which I had stands out in my mind. It was with a leader of one of the Faith Missions. I asked him what he felt was the real achievement of the work which he was doing. He answered as follows. "We would not claim to be doing a work. We are rather the spectators of a work God is doing. It is simply that of revealing Himself, His Will, His Character and His Love to individual souls, so that in discovering Him they find that which means more than this life itself; something greater than the most perfectly governed State could ever hope to create; something which puts meaning into life, which brings light right into the darkness which is the ordinary state of every human heart. We believe that God is always present and ever eager to pour Himself out into every present situation with a Pentecostal unfolding of His sovereign power. This alone matters".

I must say that I was impressed in South America by the quite obvious change one could note on persons' faces who had gone through this living personal experience. It occurred to me that these Faith Missions to-day bear to the Methodists, Baptists and Presbyterians of the past something of the same relation which these historic bodies in turn bore to what preceded them. It would, of course, be a mistake to think that this dynamic, inspirational religion, centring in individual experience, belongs only to the Faith Mission type of Church; one can see the same living fervour in the missionary activity of the Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians and others. The main difference is that the older bodies have more stability, and as a consequence are able to interpret the Bible in a manner which does more justice to the richness of its contents.

One of the striking features of many of the Mission Movements is their sense of the nearness of the Second Coming. This doctrine, though believed in by other churches, is not felt in its immediacy. One consequence of this different emphasis on doctrine is that where people believe in the Second Coming there is a proportionately increased sense of urgency in circulating the Scriptures.

Future of Scripture distribution

One last conversation I must report. It, like the first I quoted, was from one who had laboured long in South America. He said: "It would be difficult to express adequately all that evangelical bodies owe to the work of the Bible Societies; not only have they provided the churches with the Scriptures, but they have themselves helped to circulate these through colporteurs. To-day, however, the whole pattern affecting the distribution of the Scriptures in South America is changing. In a sense the Bible Society movement pioneered events in South America. Then the evangelical missions followed up a generation later. When they, in turn, became, so to speak, established churches, the need for the Bible Society colporteur became secondary. The churches were themselves the colporteurs, using in some cases all their members; in other cases individuals appointed to the task and called evangelists or lay-preachers. The time has now come, however, when with the rapid development in all aspects of the human situation, the colporteur in South America is coming back into his own. He must, however, be a much more highly-trained man than in the past; he must become not only a pioneer to the churches, but an adviser and colleague."

"How interesting!", I replied, "that you should raise this matter. I expect you already know that such a scheme is being taken up by the Bible Societies, and is known as 'the Latin American Colportage Training Project', and has for its director the Rev. Dr. Samuel Nelson". I need not, however, develop that matter here because it has received considerable publicity elsewhere.

*

How can we sum up the situation in South America?

First, the divergence between Roman Catholic and Evangelical is widening. It is unlikely, therefore, that within foreseeable distance the future holds conditions in which an atmosphere of unanimous outlook towards the Bible will come into existence. The present Roman Catholic policy of Scriptural circulation will slowly grow, but will not become an effective competitor with evangelical circulation for at least another generation.

Christianity in South America faces a future which will not become easier but increasingly more difficult. Most people's horizons do not stretch much

beyond their own family circle and local church membership. In South America this is true of both Roman Catholics and evangelicals. In this age, however, people are compelled to grasp some kind of world outlook. The factor which may in the future create a little more unity in Christendom with a better understanding of different viewpoints will probably not come from inside Christianity itself. It will come during the next fifty years when the living force of other world religions, such as Buddhism, Hinduism and Islam, will confront, in a manner entirely new in history, all who profess and call themselves Christians.

The future, like the past and the present, belongs entirely to God. Only by utter devotion, humility and faith can we freely offer ourselves to God to be used by Him in the creation of His own future, preparing us for the Kingdom. So may it be for all who love God in South America.

The Bible Society in Bolivia

Tom Hudspith

The political and economic setting of Bible Society work

NO ONE CAN SAY anything about Bolivia these days, on whatever aspect of its life, without beginning with some reference to the political and economic situation. Since the country declared its independence from Spain, it has probably had more internal revolutions—many of them fortunately quite bloodless—than any other Latin America Republic. The present régime, which came into power just over four years ago and which is called the National Revolutionary Movement, has indeed been "revolutionary" in its tenets and methods of carrying them out. As champions of the mine workers and of the great mass of Indians, almost all of whom are engaged in agriculture, large numbers living and working (until four years ago) under an ancient feudal system, this Government—at one stroke—changed the whole economy of the country. On the assumption of power, the mines (chiefly tin and silver) were nationalised, and a drastic agrarian reform measure was passed, taking most of the land from the landlords and portioning it out among the Indians. Almost overnight the Indians were syndicalized, as the miners had been, and power fell into the hands of their leaders, many of whom unfortunately proved unfit for leadership and more concerned with their own gain than with the needs of the rank and file, with the result that the "poor Indians" were no better off than before. No one would deny that reform along many lines was more than overdue, but many measures were put into action too precipitately, and the change-over was so radical in so short a time, that inevitably a good deal of disorder resulted.

The low price of tin and the inability to work the mines efficiently, partly because of the lack of skilled technical help, and partly because of the employment of unnecessary redundant workers (who had to be rewarded with jobs because of their help in winning the revolution), and also because of the attitude of so many workers that: "now the mines are ours, it does not matter much whether we work or not!"—all this has had a disastrous effect on the economy of the country, as witness the growing inflation. In the last three years the

exchange on the dollar has soared from Bs.700 = $1.00 to Bs.12,000 = $1.00 to-day. The increasing production of petroleum under the present régime is very heartening and a bright augury for the future.

The Government gives big subsidies to essentials—flour, sugar, rice, etc., but many handling these goods have engaged in contraband with the neighbouring republics on a big scale, so that very often the poorer people who should benefit by these subsidies cannot do so.

With it all, we are profundly grateful to the rulers of the country for all the liberty we enjoy for practically every aspect of our evangelical work, and particularly for Scripture distribution. Not only was the 100% tax on books coming into the country abolished this year, but there has been no restriction whatever on the distribution of these books. It is true that local petty officials, here and there, usually in the more remote districts, will occasionally obstruct our work, but these are small affairs against the general pattern of distribution.

Problem of price-fixing

With fantastic exchange conditions as these, and with nothing like a corresponding increase in wages to compensate, it is exceedingly difficult to fix selling prices for books. If we followed the exchange fluctuations, we would have to change our prices every two or three weeks! Within four days, recently, there was a drop of about 1,500 units or Bolivian dollars, and then another rise of 2,000. This means our losses have been exceptionally heavy.

Increasing circulation

Over the last two years there has been an increasing demand for Scriptures, and the total of "new readers" is steadily rising throughout the country, as a result of the Government's emphasis on educating the Indian. For a country with a population of around 3½ millions, and an illiteracy rate of roughly 70%, the following figures of sales for the last twelve months are, we feel, very good: Bibles 14,254; Testaments 27,700; Portions 131,390; Total 173,344.

It is especially gratifying to see the large numbers of complete Bibles sold, and also the large increase in sales of Testaments. It would seem to confirm the steady growth of the evangelical church in Bolivia—the Book is being read more.

The very large increase in the sale of Gospel Portions is due in some measure to the great demand for the illustrated Gospels. With St. Matthew now available in this form, giving us four different illustrated books, the sales have grown considerably. There is no doubt that people are buying and reading this Gospel who would never have bothered to buy one of the small Portions before. Then the Christmas selections, with their attractive coloured covers and the Christmas story in big clear type, are becoming increasingly popular and many churches and individual members are using them as a Christmas card with their name and greeting printed on the back; we are now placing around 30,000 of them each year.

This big general advance in sales is very largely attributed to the part-time colportage work of the different missions. The Bible Institutes and schools have a growing number of students, and a very real part of their practical work assignments consists, at weekends and during vacation periods, in taking Scriptures into every part and corner of this land. The extension of our auto road system is enabling us to reach places that were almost inaccessible years ago.

Valuable service of Indian colporteurs

Every year brings home to us more and more how much we owe to the Indian believers of this land. To employ a full-time colporteur to travel long distances to reach just a few homes (the scattered huts of these Indians over these unlimited mountain ranges has to be seen to be believed—in my early years here I sometimes travelled a whole day over barren mountains without hardly seeing a single home), would be prohibitive; but here are these brethren going to their own people, staying the night wherever they may happen to arrive; meeting their fellows on common ground, all with the same mother tongue, all agriculturalists with their roots deep in the soil, and with a zeal to explain something about this wonderful Book that has changed and transformed their own lives. They concentrate usually, on these trips, on Quechua and Spanish Gospels, with the smaller Spanish New Testaments and the illustrated Gospels, and the sales on many of these itineraries have been remarkable.

Indian language versions

With a predominantly Indian population in this land, it is a great satisfaction to have complete Testaments in circulation in both the main Indian languages, Quechua and Aymara. The former has been in use for more than thirty years, but was revised recently (three years ago) and this present edition is being acceptably used throughout all our Quechua-speaking territory. The Aymara, now in use for the last two years, has been eagerly bought up and a new edition has already been called for. In addition to the Testaments, which have circulated more generally among the believers and other interested folk, several thousands of Quechua Gospels, Luke and John, have been sold over the last few years, mostly at open air meetings on crowded market days, and at the numerous fairs and religious feasts held in towns and villages all through the country.

In recent years considerable work has been done (much of it exploratory) among the lowland Indians of the Amazonian basin in Bolivia, and one Gospel has been translated into the Ayoreo and Yuracare tongues. In the Chaco region, bordering Argentina and Paraguay, the main tribe is Guarani, and two Gospels were published in this language some years ago; there is a growing church among this people and we expect more translation work to be done in the near future.

The national church has taken an increasing interest in Bible Day for several years now, and made a very real contribution through offerings taken up in the individual churches on that day to the work of Scripture distribution.

Results and prospects of Bible Society work

We believe that the dissemination of the Word of God in Bolivia, especially over the last ten years, has had a marked effect on the country as a whole. Apart from resulting in direct conversions in many cases, and in bringing others into their first contact with the evangelical church, which, later on, has led into definite faith in Christ, much previous hostility and fanaticism has been softened, if not removed, and replaced by a more tolerant spirit towards the evangelical church.

As for the future, it would seem that we have an "open door", with an increasing demand for the Word of Life, with willing hands on the part of many national brethren to do their part in placing the Book.

The Significance of Bible Society Work in Peru and Ecuador

John H. Twentyman

Pioneers of the work

IN THE Andean Republics of Peru and Ecuador, as in other parts of Latin America, it is not possible to consider the work and growth of the Church of Christ without taking into account the work of the Bible Society. Indeed it is true to say that the Bible Society was the forerunner of the missionary enterprise in the west coast Republics. As far back as the early 1820's, at the time when Peru had newly secured her independence from Spain under the liberator General José San Martin, James Thomson—affectionately known in Spanish America as Diego Thomson—set out as agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society from Buenos Aires, and brought the Word of God for the first time, as far as we know, to the shores of Peru and Ecuador. In His history of the Bible Society, William Canton tells us that so great was the demand for Scriptures at that time that Thomson sold 1,000 copies of the Bible and New Testament in the main plaza of Lima in two days. Thomson remained in Lima for some months distributing the Scriptures and helping San Martin to inaugurate the school system of the newly-formed Republic. Following his successful visit there was further sporadic sowing of the Seed during the next fifty years, before any definite or permanent missionary work was attempted.

In 1888 Francisco Penzotti made his headquarters in Callao, Peru, as agent of the American Bible Society and shortly after his arrival inaugurated a salon for services where, in the course of time, we read, more than 200 persons gathered together to listen to the preaching of the Gospel. After a ministry of some eighteen months, he decided to go south to the city of Arequipa, second only in importance to Lima, and extremely fanatical. No sooner had he started offering the Scriptures for sale from door to door, than he met the Roman Bishop who immediately threw Penzotti into jail. The Bishop denounced him as an "audacious propagandist of immoral and corrupting books". Not long after this experience, another, still more bitter, awaited him in Callao where in July, 1890, he was again imprisoned in a dark foul-smelling cell, with rats running across the floor. As food was not provided, this had to be brought to him daily by some member of his family. In March, 1891, after eight long months, his unjust imprisonment by then having become an international incident, he was released.... The cause of the Gospel had triumphed despite all attempts of the Enemy to impede and stop it. It was Easter Saturday, and on the following day, to an overflowing and joyous congregation, he preached on "Christ Risen and Triumphant over Death, sin and every evil imagination of man's heart".

Beginnings of Bible Society work

In general it may be said that the distribution carried out during most of the 19th century paved the way for regular mission societies to enter the field at the close of that century and the beginning of the 20th. It was in 1901 that the first permanent Bible Society depot was opened in Callao, Peru, by A. R. Stark,

of the British Society, and since that time, besides continually supplying missionaries and national workers with Scriptures, the Society has continued to send its colporteurs out to districts which were untouched by other missionary agencies. At the present two offices are maintained in Lima, one in Quito and one in Guayaquil, these being the only sources from which Scriptures may be obtained apart from copies of the Roman Catholic version of the Bible which may be secured from bookstores of the Roman Church, but at such high prices as to place them effectively beyond the reach of most people.

Distribution and problem of illiteracy

It is a temptation sometimes in Bible Society circles to place too great an emphasis on circulation figures; and while every member of the staff wishes to see the circulation increase year by year, the fact should not be overlooked that more important than circulation figures are "hours of reading" figures. Are the books being read? It is of course not the primary duty of the Society to encourage Bible reading. On the other hand, unless the books are read, the real underlying goal of the Society would be left unfulfilled, for in the last analysis the books are published in order that they might be read.

At the present time circulation stands at approximately 110,000 volumes a year in Peru and 80,000 in Ecuador. However, when these figures are analysed further, it will be found that an increasing number is being distributed by the pastors and members of the local church, in comparison with the number put into circulation by the colporteurs. This does not necessarily mean that the colporteurs are doing less work than formerly. Rather it is an indication that the members of the church are assuming greater responsibility in circulating the Scriptures. In 1955 the approximate division in Peru was: 23% circulated by colporteurs and 77% through the churches and over-the-counter sales.

There is a problem which continually faces the churches in South America and which is closely allied to the work of the Bible Society—that of illiteracy. Over half the population of the countries served by the North Andean Agency can neither read nor write, the majority of these people being either mountain or jungle Indians. Little is being done for them although the Bible Society, in conjunction with the missionaries, is providing portions of the Scriptures for them in more than half a dozen different languages and dialects, such as Quechua (5 dialects), Piro, Shipibo, Aguaruna and Aymara. Nevertheless, this still presents a serious and urgent problem to the Christian church in general.

Religious situation

The mountain Indians, numbering four to five million in the two countries under review, are the descendants of the peoples ruled by the ancient Incas, but in their present condition, they are social outcasts. The Roman Church has nominally incorporated them within their ecclesiastical fold, but the Indian still secretly clings to his ancient beliefs and worships the gods of his forefathers, although now bearing the names of Spanish saints. To reach his soul with the Gospel the evangelical church must first gain his confidence, speak his language literally as well as culturally and learn to interpret Christ to him as the fulfilment of his needs and aspirations.—This is so far being done by comparatively few missionaries.

As in all of Latin America to-day, the population is on the increase; interest in the Gospel of Christ is also growing, hence we should expect the demand for the Scriptures to increase. Many men and women among the mestizo population

especially are turning to God for an answer to their problems. It is estimated that the evangelical community has probably doubled during the past 15 years, but as no census has been taken since 1941, it is impossible to secure exact data.

Economic standards and price-fixing

The economic aspect of life in the Andean Republics under review presents a continual challenge to the Bible Society, particularly in view of the different standards of living in the producer and consumer countries as well as in different parts of the same Agency territory. For instance, living in the progressive coastal region of Peru and Ecuador is almost as costly as in many parts of North America, while in the more conservative and backward areas of the Sierra the earning power of the Indian is only a fraction of that of the coastal city dweller. The result of this inequality in remuneration is reflected in the problem which confronts the Bible Society with regard to price-fixing. Are we to price the Scriptures in line with coastal standards, which would greatly reduce sales among most of the poorer people in the mountain area? Or are we to set the price low enough that the Sierra population has no difficulty in obtaining a copy of God's Word? But by doing this, very often the price is so low according to coastal standards that many of the better educated people, those of which the Peruvian and Ecuadorean church stand in most need as members, consider that there is something wrong with the book, or else its intrinsic value is depreciated in their estimation, and incidentally the whole economy of the local agency is placed in a more delicate situation in that the income is greatly reduced while expenses continue to rise. This is a problem which cannot be said to have been satisfactorily solved, although it is receiving continual attention from the Agency staff.

Bright prospects for circulation

Despite such problems which are contingent with the work, there are reasons for believing that the future of Bible work is bright. There will undoubtedly be periods of persecution and trial for the Church of Christ, such as that through which the Church in Colombia is currently passing, but we are assured that "the Word of God is not bound". (II Timothy 2:9). Political set-ups may change overnight; to-day's friendly government may give place to-morrow to an ultra-conservative government, persecuting minority groups, and curtailing religious liberties—but God has a way of pouring out a special blessing on those who are most in need of His succour.

It is not possible for us to prophesy regarding the future, although if the last fifty years may be taken as an indication of what the future holds, we may say with confidence that the Bible Society will have ample opportunities for distributing God's Word; multitudes continue to *need* it, many *desire to obtain* it; as the Church faces the challenge of illiteracy and effectively overcomes it, an increasing number of new literates must be provided with it. But Bible distribution should never be considered as an end in itself. The Society provides the Scriptures so that they may be *read*. A Bible-reading church will ensure a bright future for Bible circulation, and towards this end the Society must ever be ready to meet the need.

Scripture Distribution in Colombia and Venezuela

Kenneth Bystrom

General setting of Bible Society work

THE EVANGELICAL witness in oil-rich Venezuela and dollar-short Colombia present a picture of striking contrasts. Aside from the different economies of the neighbouring Republics, the attitude of their respective governments and the tremendous influence of the Roman Catholic Church (especially in Colombia) contribute largely to bringing about these contrasts and it is only natural that whatever affects the evangelical work in general, affects in a very marked way the programme of Scripture distribution.

Prior to 1948 Colombia, with twice Venezuela's population and evangelical constituency, doubled Venezuela's Scripture circulation. Then an intense wave of persecution swept across Colombia, which caused the picture to change and since that time Venezuela has surpassed Colombia in Scripture circulation. The approximate figures for last year were: Venezuela: 340,000 and Colombia: 170,000. We look hopefully for the day when the normal trend in circulation will again be resumed.

During the present year, Venezuela for the first time in eleven years sold forty-year oil concessions to several foreign oil companies for fabulous sums. Millions of dollars of government funds have been expended in public works such as super-highways, housing projects, hospitals, schools, soil conservation, and agricultural improvements. Colombia, on the other hand, has suffered a dollar shortage resulting in a tremendous devaluation of the peso. Because of this and the constantly changing importation regulations, business men in Colombia find it increasingly difficult to carry on business in a normal way. The fact that the Bible Agencies are registered with the local chamber of commerce has proved a distinct advantage in these difficult days when Protestant groups have been prohibited from distributing their literature. Our Agency is granted a commercial licence to carry on its operations and each individual colporteur (salesman) is granted a selling permit by the government police department, which enables him to travel freely about the country selling the Scriptures. In spite of these permits, however, the work of colportage is not carried on without intimidation, persecution and occasional imprisonments brought about by priests in collaboration with certain local authorities.

Being registered with the government and the chamber of commerce nevertheless presents difficulties along with its advantages, because the same importation restrictions placed upon other business establishments are also imposed upon the Bible Societies. In order to conserve its dollars for goods vital to the nation's economic welfare, many so-called luxury items have been placed far down on the importation list. Books, up to the present time, have remained in group one and a 10 per cent. government tax has been imposed on the total value of all books imported. It is feared, however, that books may soon be placed in group three and thus be subjected to a 30 per cent. tax. This together

with the securing of importation licence, paying of deposits, and other proverbial "red tape" will place an additional burden upon the Bible Societies as well as upon other book dealers, making book selling and Scripture distribution increasingly difficult.

Colombia Centennial

To commemorate the arrival of the first Protestant missionary, Dr. Henry B. Pratt, one hundred years ago, the evangelical churches of Colombia celebrated a centenary of evangelical work. Significant was the fact that the first Protestant missionary should also have been the one responsible for a translation of the Spanish Bible into what is commonly known as the Modern Version. Plans for the centenary celebrations were made by the Confederation of Evangelical Churches of Colombia and evangelistic campaigns were held in the major centres throughout the country during the months of June and July. No propaganda advertising these celebrations was permitted and all meetings were restricted to evangelical churches and schools, but with surprisingly little opposition and considerable blessing.

The American Bible Society printed a special edition of 20,000 Spanish New Testaments with a gold imprint on the outside cover, and a reproduction of the Colombian flag in colours on the inside front page. These New Testaments were sold to the various mission groups and national churches throughout Colombia at a very reasonable price, and used in their special evangelistic campaigns.

Pan American Congress on Evangelism

In August, just a month later, the Pan American Congress on Evangelism, sponsored by Youth for Christ International in co-operation with the national churches of Venezuela, was celebrated in the capital city of Caracas. Some 2,000 delegates were registered including visitors from several South American countries and the United States. Daily Bible study courses as well as meetings of a devotional and inspirational character were held in the Central Baptist church and a large downtown theatre. Huge evening rallies, where attendance sometimes reached 7,000, were held in one of the bull rings of the city. Fifty thousand Gospels of John, with a special cover on which appeared a statue of Venezuela's liberator, Símon Bolivar, and an invitation to attend the Congress, were prepared by the American Bible Society and purchased by Youth for Christ International through the local Bible Agency. These Gospel Portions were used extensively in all of the pre- and post-Congress evangelistic campaigns as well as during the Congress held in Caracas. Thousands of decisions for Christ were reported and the event gave a real impetus to the evangelical work in Venezuela.

Golden Anniversary of Evangelical Work in Western Venezuela

Another significant event in Venezuela was the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the work of the Evangelical Alliance Mission in western Venezuela. In the year 1906, missionaries Bach and Christiansen arrived on the western shores of the country to begin their Gospel ministry. From their small and humble beginnings, the work has grown miraculously and to-day there are thousands of Christians, several national churches, a Bible Institute, a radio ministry, print shop and book store. Their book store "La Estrella de la Mañana" (The Morning Star) working in close collaboration with the Bible Agencies, has for some years been one of the major Scripture distribution centres in Venezuela.

A striking contrast

A striking contrast of the evangelical witness in Colombia to that in Venezuela is provided by missionary Elof Anderson, who visited the Golden Jubilee celebration of the Evangelical Alliance Mission in western Venezuela early this year. He entitles this portion of his letter "Colombia Dunkirk" and says: "When we crossed the international boundary back into Colombia, we came down from the Mount of Transfiguration into the valley. April was the month of victory for Venezuela, but a Pearl Harbour for the Gospel work in Colombia. During the past two weeks, thirty more evangelical churches have been closed by Government decree. Seven pastors have been jailed. The evangelical testimony has been outlawed in two-thirds of the nation, including the entire Choco region, which we just visited. Our entire river district along the Magdalena and Papayal rivers has been declared Mission Territory. No Gospel service, public or private, is now permitted. Thousands of Spanish priests have been imported and charged with the task of subjecting this people to the dominion of the Roman Catholic religion"." This is a call to prayer" says missionary Anderson. "Will you join us in unceasing prayer that the forces of evil shall be rebuked and that the cause of Christ shall triumph?".

In spite of the "Colombia Dunkirk" it is most interesting and heartening to know that more Bibles were distributed by the Bible Societies in Colombia last year than during any other year in the history of the Bible Society work in that country, and from all indications, there will be a very good circulation again this year.

In a recent visit throughout the Republic of Colombia, the Agency Secretary was impressed and encouraged by the overall courage and optimism on the part of missionaries, national pastors and lay workers. All seemed to be of the opinion that a brighter day was in store for evangelical work in Colombia, which has suffered so much under the heavy hand of persecution and religious intolerance in the past years.

Bible Day was again observed in both Colombia and Venezuela on the last Sunday of October with splendid and whole-hearted co-operation on the part of the national church. Offerings received by the Societies from the churches are on a constant increase along with Scripture circulation, a fact which indicates a vital interest in the ministry of Scripture distribution and encouragement of use on the part of the evangelical Christians.

Materially prosperous Venezuela and downtrodden, persecuted Colombia both stand in dire need of the Scriptures. Consecrated and dedicated hands are needed to share the true bread of life with those who are feeding on the husks of tradition, superstition and religion. The Bible Agencies in these countries are constantly on the alert for new and improved methods of getting the "old Book" into the hands and especially into the hearts of these dear needy people. They also stand in constant need of the prayers and support of God's people everywhere who are interested in seeing His Word go forth to the ends of the earth.

Scripture Distribution in Chile

David C. Brackenridge

THE REPUBLIC OF CHILE clings to the western border of the continent as if in fear of being crushed by the mighty Andes swept away by the Pacific Ocean. Earthquakes and tidal waves are part of her history. Between the white capped mountains of the Andes and the vast ocean, this long stretch of land has given Chile her own peculiar characteristics. Before the opening of the Panama Canal and the advent of the aeroplane, Chile was an insular country and had the mentality of an island, in fact her people have been called "the British of South America". With a coast line of 2,700 miles, Chile has always been very much maritime-minded. She has had less political upheavals than most of her neighbours, and to-day takes a leading place among the Latin American states.

The religious situation

A general census of the republic was taken in 1952, of which the details have only recently come to light. The religious aspect is interesting The census gave the total population as 5,932,000 and of this number 240,800 are listed as Protestants; that is to say 4.06% of the population belong to the evangelical faith. It must be supposed that those who registered as Protestants were indeed so, and that the number of persons actually influenced by the Protestant movement must be around 600,000, including adherents and sympathizers. The previous census taken in 1940 gave the Protestant community as numbering 119,000. While the population of Chile during these twelve years increased 15%, the Protestant element increased 100%, and we would be bold enough to suggest that the Bible Societies can be credited in some good measure for this notable progress.

Protestant advance in Chile has caused some concern in Roman Catholic circles. In a very well edited and instructive monthly magazine called "Message" and published in Santiago, there appeared a short time ago a frank and penetrating article entitled "Causes of Protestant advance in Chile". The writer, a parochial priest with years of experience in the suburbs of Santiago, says many arresting and illuminating things. His comment upon the power of the Scriptures is a remarkable confession. He writes: "Not all Protestants in Chile are motivated to make war against Catholics nor by foreign gold, as is sometimes said. Neither does Protestantism consist in back-street preaching and propaganda and proselytism. There are a great number of persons who have become Protestants by sincere conviction, having felt a true desire for God, and perhaps this first personal religious experience was having contact with the Word of God in the Gospels. At times we ask ourselves why some persons who before were indifferent to religion, or even bad, experience a radical change of life on becoming evangelicals. There are real cases. Perhaps the answer is here. The Gospel is the Word of God and is able to change human hearts. Protestantism is not false or bad because it produces these fruits, but because of the truths Protestantism denies. We know that the Sacred Scriptures were entrusted to the Holy Church, but if someone exploits the riches contained in the Word, he will soon feel the

effect, as a remedy which helps the patient though not administered by a doctor's hand. The Word of God has not lost its power, but the regret is that it has not reached multitudes of Chileans. The message of Christ is still unknown to many whose religion consists in a series of meaningless practices totally disconnected from their life. The Protestants go direct to the redeeming message of Christ through the Scriptures. The instruction and food for the inner life, worship, private and public prayer, rule of life, even manner of speech—all this they find in the diligent reading of the Bible. To adhere to Protestantism for them means to adhere to the Gospels".

This is an unexpected tribute from an unexpected quarter and reveals that the vitality of the evangelical church in Chile has been due to her use and diffusion of the Scriptures.

The Bible Societies' contribution

There has been a steady increase over the years of Scripture circulation in Chile, especially of Bibles and New Testaments. For example, during the ten years from 1930/1939 the number of complete Bibles sold each year averaged 5,636 copies. During the years 1940/49 the average increased slightly to 7,568 copies, but from 1950/1956 the average yearly sale of Bibles increased to 18,758. The total sale of Scriptures in 1930 was 64,978 copies. Last year (1956) the total reached 290,969 including 23,709 Bibles, 40,109 Testaments and 227,151 Portions.

This distribution was made through the following channels:—(*a*) missionary societies; (*b*) national pastors; (*c*) evangelical bookstores; (*d*) employed colporteurs—in this order of importance and contribution, as we shall see.

Missionary forces in Chile are of considerable strength and in the last two or three years new groups, mostly from small independent Boards, have arrived to join forces with the older ones. The principal missionary societies working in Chile are the Araucanian Mission (Anglican), Assemblies of God, Christian and Missionary Alliance, Christian Mission to Many Lands (Brethren), Methodist Episcopal Mission, Presbyterian Mission (U.S.A.), Salvation Army, Soldiers and Gospel Mission, Swedish Pentecostal Mission and Baptist Association for World Evangelization.

All do not participate in colportage activities, but some make it a part of their missionary programme, notably so the Christian and Missionary Alliance and the Southern Baptist Mission. Both these missions were pioneers in the southern provinces. From their headquarters at Temuco they have persistently sown the "Good Seed" of the Kingdom. Churches have been planted and grown, and to-day this section of Chile, comprising the provinces of Cautin and Valdivia, have the highest ratio of evangelicals in the country—Cautin has 9.2% and Valdivia has 7.8%. Temuco is considered the Protestant capital of Chile. Other missions have helped too in this region.

A very decided contribution to Bible distribution has been made by national pastors. The largest number of them belong to the self-supporting, indigenous Pentecostal churches. They form the largest group and have more members than all the others put together. 180,000 might be a fair estimate. They have created what one might call a "popular religion" among the humble workers and peasantry of Chile. They have no educational or medical institutions, but concentrate all their efforts in preaching and Scripture distribution. Out of the highways and byways they go and spread themselves all over the country. They conduct no

large evangelistic campaigns but every congregation is a missionary church. They preach in the open-air, people may laugh or may not listen at all, but the "Word" is proclaimed, the Seed is sown, and though fruit may not be immediate they are content to wait a later harvest. They visit prisons and hospitals with Scriptures, they may leave a "portion" on a seat in the plaza or on a bus. They never forget their motto—"Chile for Christ". Now these people call upon the Bible Societies for a very large supply of Scriptures, and their valuable contribution to the diffusion of the Word of Life must be acknowledged.

Another channel of distribution is through the evangelical book stores. There are two in Santiago—one supported by the Presbyterians and Methodists, "El Sembrador", which is the oldest one, and the other is "El Lucero", supported by the Southern Baptists. There are two in Valparaiso, one belonging to the Assemblies of God Mission and the other being under the supervision of the Baptists. At Concepcion, the third city of Chile and a university centre, there are also two book stores strictly dedicated to the sale of evangelical literature and where supplies of Scriptures are available. At Temuco in the south, a new large bookstore was opened recently in the centre of the town, and is under the care of the Christian and Missionary Alliance. There is therefore no lack of opportunity to secure the Scriptures in these important towns, and sales testify to the demand there is for them.

The question now arises, where do our colporteurs fit into the picture? Actually they are rather in the background, for two reasons. During the past few years our supplies have been coming at very irregular intervals because of delays in securing the necessary permits to import, with the result that we have often been without stocks and unable to supply our men, so we have not felt it wise to increase our small staff; and secondly, owing to the high cost of living and inflation, salaries, by government decree, have been increasing year by year at a fantastic rate. At the beginning of 1956 salaries were increased by 46½%. Added to salaries are a number of payments for social security laws, amounting to almost 40% on each salary paid, so that for every three men employed the employer is paying for more than four men. Salaried colporteurs have thus become a very expensive method of Bible distribution. We find their small sales do not justify the expense involved. We have one full-time colporteur and two working on a commission basis. The two working on commission each sell more Scriptures than the one working on a full-time salary and commission as well. However, the fact remains that we can sell all the Scriptures we can get through missionary channels and national pastors and the colporteur has fallen into third place. We are not suggesting that their day is done, but to meet the present age they will have to be men of strong character, strong convictions and better trained than formerly. The new training school in Mexico should be the answer we have been looking for.

Conclusion

The outlook for Bible distribution in Chile is indeed encouraging. There is a tremendous demand for the Scriptures at the present moment, particularly for Bibles, and this demand has only been partly met. The people on the whole are well disposed towards evangelical work. The country is liberal-minded and there is every freedom of action. This is our day of opportunity, and, meeting with no delays or setbacks from the Exchange Control Commission to import Scriptures, we should continue to advance and make our unique and notable contribution towards the spiritual up-lift of this small, but vigorous nation on the west coast of South America.

The Work of The Central American Agency

J. W. Limkemann

THE CENTRAL AMERICAN Agency has set itself, as its goal for 1957, the enlistment of 10,000 voluntary distributors of the Scriptures. There are already thousands of readers of the Bible in each of the six Central American republics. Those who are readers are being called upon to enlist others to read the Bible. Voluntary distributors will be challenged to circulate 50,000 whole Bibles throughout Central America in 1957.

The evangelical movement in Central America has grown by feeding on the Word of God. Here as in all other parts of Latin America Evangelical Churches are co-operating whole-heartedly in Scripture distribution. Here the demand for Scriptures increases surprisingly, yet consistently, year by year. The following tables tell in figures the story of the increase of demand since the Central America Agency was established 65 years ago:

Table I—Through 65 years		*Volumes distributed*
1892-1921	30 years	682,409
1922-1931	10 ,,	779,023
1932-1941	10 ,,	1,088,864
1942-1951	10 ,,	2,110,043
1952-1956	5 ,,	2,063,719
	65 years	6,724,058

Due to the multiple political divisions of this area, each under its own sovereign government, and due to the varied types of monetary exchange, peculiar problems present themselves to this agency. Another problem is the high percentage of illiteracy, which is greatest among the Indian population. Possibly there are less than two million dialect-speaking peoples in all Central America, but their speech is divided into 25 distinct dialects. But these problems form a challenge to make this unequal team pull together towards the goal of a Bible in every home, and the further goal of a literate homogeneous people. At any rate. it can already be shown that no political division of the area is being neglected:

Table II—Circulation by countries, 1956

Country	*Population*	*Bibles*	*Testaments*	*Portions*	*Total*
Guatemala	3,048,000	12,069	10,567	169,726	192,362
Honduras	1,557,000	2,641	2,406	34,144	39,191
Canal Zone ..	52,822	1,199	1,015	19,100	21,314
Panama	864,000	3,730	2,310	36,666	42,706
Costa Rica	881,000	2,804	1,536	25,371	29,711
El Salvador ..	2,054,000	6,332	10,527	87,908	104,767
Nicaragua	1,166,000	2,527	2,899	50,798	56,224
Total	9,622,822	31,302	31,260	423,713	486,275

If Central Americans are to become people of the Word, readers of the Bible, whose lives are directed by its message (no less can be our aim), it is essential that finally 100,000 Bibles per year be provided for Central America. We may well ask if that high figure constitutes an adequate supply. A copy of the Bible used in the home and carried to church cannot be expected to last more than ten years. And even with one million useable Bibles in Central America there would be only one for each ten people. Therefore 50,000 Bibles distributed in 1957 would not be too many but too few, if only people had a will to read it. May God convince all people that the one thing needful for man, indeed the one inescapable thing, is to meet Him. The Word of God comes to us abundantly. May we embrace it.

Anglo-American and Latin American cultures meet in the area of the Caribbean. This same area continues to witness another encounter, begun in 1519, that between the Hispanic and Mayan-Aztec cultures. Following closely on the advent of the Spaniard came the African. Through the intervening years almost every country of Europe, as well as China and India, have contributed to this human mosaic. Here men need to know that God is One, that the earth is the Lord's, the world, and they that dwell therein.

But this Oneness of God, with its corollary of the oneness of all people in God, seems like stark foolishness within the present explosive and disintegrating situation in Central America. Political revolution still too truly symbolizes a life whose rhythm is marked by the rise and fall of dictators. Only yesterday we buried the last one to be shot down, Somoza of Nicaragua. He tragically followed Remón of Panama is less than two years. Poverty with tragedy hangs like a pall over these lands so richly endowed by the Creator, yet made so poor by the selfishness of men; selfishness both of those living within the area and of those exploiting its unhappy situation from without. But God as made known to us in the Bible enters our tragedy and with severe judgment upon us brings us hope through the power of the resurrection of Christ.

A Bible Society agency is concerned with the task of making the Scriptures available in its area. In Central America the foremost emphasis is placed on the distribution of portions. The most popular portions are the Sermon on the Mount and the Gospel of John, followed by the synoptic Gospels, and then the other portions of the New Testament, and Proverbs. Each year at Christmas and Easter the portions with special covers for the season are widely used. For almost eleven years Mr. Ralph Rice has been carrying on distribution campaigns in which few Bibles and Testaments are used, but thousands of portions are distributed by sale. Our other colporteurs, too, are instructed to emphasize the use of portions. The reading of the portion we believe creates a demand for Bibles and Testaments. These in turn are made available through depositories, bookstores and correspondents. A great host of missionaries and pastors serve either as direct correspondents of the agency or secure the Scriptures for resale through bookstores.

A drawing that depicts five portions with the title, "Portions are the best tracts" holds before evangelicals the importance of using portions in personal evangelism. This illustration has been published widely during 1956.

As far as possible this agency ties its work in with the programmes of all evangelical missions and churches at work in the area. Instead of elaborating a detailed programme of its own, its aim is to co-operate with their programmes.

The Secretary and his associates make themselves available to address retreats and conferences, and answer the calls as far as possible of local churches, to encourage among all evangelicals the use and further distribution of the Scriptures.

Portions are made available for evangelistic campaigns, preferably co-operative efforts. One instance may serve to illustrate how portions are used in such campaigns: In August, 1956, when Dr. Alfonso Rodriguez, rector of the Union Seminary in Matanzas, Cuba, came to Panama City to conduct an evangelistic campaign, the Bible Society provided portions, on the backs of which the announcement of the campaign was printed. These were distributed by church members prior to, as well as during, the campaign. Afterwards, when Bible classes were organised for converts, again portions were provided, now the Gospel of Mark, which became the basis of study for the classes.

A special Bible emphasis season leading up to Bible Sunday affords an excellent opportunity for displays of the Scriptures in churches, libraries and other appropriate places. During the same season literature explaining the service rendered by the agency is widely distributed. In answer to invitations the secretary, and others available for the task, tell the story of the Bible Society in the churches. Each year posters appear in all the churches, calling attention to the importance of the Bible in everyday life. Films demonstrate vividly the vital place of the Bible among the people.

In Central America Christian bookstores have multiplied during late years. These offer an outlet for the Scriptures that would be hard to duplicate in any other way. They present to the public an opportunity to secure the Scriptures at any time. At the same time they are manned by personnel committed to Christ and His message, and always available to the public for consultation. Currently the Central America Agency c-operates with sixteen bookstores by giving a special discount designed to help meet overhead expenses of operation. During the year one bookstore alone has sold $6,000.00 worth of Scriptures.

About twenty evangelical periodicals in the area open their columns to news releases issued by the agency. Information and inspiration for distribution and use of the Bible reaches the Christian public through these publications. Bible Society publications themselves go to the great majority of missionaries and pastors as well as to some lay leaders. Occasionally the secular press too admits into its columns accounts of the outstanding events of the Agency.

The Central America Agency recognizes itself as a part, in the order of a microcosm, of a world-wide movement to distribute the Scriptures. Participation in this great movement designed for all peoples is presented to evangelicals of the area as a missionary opportunity.

Through the UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES, Central America finds a connection with the missionary extension of the Gospel of Jesus Christ into all the world. With deep emotion we look forward to its meeting in our area, in Brazil, during July, 1957. Latin America welcomes the Bible Societies of the world.

Bible Translation in Latin America

Eugene A. Nida

EXCEPT for impressions left by popular legends of ancient Aztecs, Mayans and Incas, Latin America is generally looked upon as a linguistic and cultural appendage of Europe. Spanish is usually regarded purely as the language of Castile; Brazilian Portuguese a direct responsibility of the mother-land, Portugal; the French of Haiti, an echo of Paris; and as for the Indians—well, most people imagine that they have either died off, or are objects for the curiosity of tourists (if the Indians are civilised), or savage subjects for books (if the explorers ever get back). But nothing could be further from the truth. Latin America does possess cultural traits which constitute a rich blend of its diverse cultural strains—Europe, Africa and aboriginal America. But Latin America is not a cultural adolescent. There is both a cultural diversity and a maturity in Latin America which must be thoroughly recognised if one is to acquire an adequate understanding of what is happening to-day in the most rapidly developing area of the world. And as in almost every other phase of Latin American life, language shares this rich and variegated heritage and is advancing with incredible strides.

Brazilian Portuguese

Brazilians have always cherished a kind of sentimental attachment for Portugal, but this has in no way dulled their independance of spirit. This is reflected in the Brazilian Portuguese language, which has its own orthographic system, has been refined by Brazil's own literary leaders, and is the medium of communication for a nation which is potentially one of the wealthiest in the world.

In assessing the significance of Brazilian Portuguese in Bible translating, one must also reckon with the fact that the evangelical constituency in Brazil is the fastest growing of any major country in the world. Moreover, the level of education of the ministry and laity in Brazil is conspicuously higher than in most areas of the world outside of Europe. As a result, Brazil not only has the trained personnel for translation and revision, but a constituency which has demanded more adequate versions in the national language.

In 1945 a committee of Brazilians and missionaries was set up to revise the current D'Almeida text. Progress was disappointingly slow, but by 1955 the New Testament revision was completed and published. Acceptance of the revision was enthusiastic, and immediately concentrated efforts were put forth to complete the Old Testament. The editorial work on the revision of the Old Testament was completed in September, 1956, and effort is being exerted to publish this text by the time of the UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES' meetings in Rio de Janeiro in July, 1957.

One of the most significant phases of the Brazilian Portuguese revision has been the fact that pressure for such a revision did not come from the academically-minded persons who thought primarily in terms of new texts and modern exegesis, but from the evangelistically-concerned people who insisted that if they

were to reach the young people of this generation they must have a text which would speak with greater clarity and forcefulness. Such an emphasis is not only the greatest possible guarantee of the quality of the undertaking, but of the degree to which it will be used when it is published.

Spanish

It is quite true that the Spanish-speaking people of Latin America tend to look to the Spanish Royal Academy for the "last word" on language usage, but when the situation seems to require it they do not hesitate to strike out for themselves in almost total disregard for what the Academy has declared, insisting that the Academy is just "behind the times". There is no doubt about the fact that the centre of gravity in literary productions has shifted to the western hemisphere, especially during this period of relative literary sterility characteristic of the Franco régime.

The evangelical community in Spanish-speaking Latin America has continued to grow rapidly, despite many instances of persecution, such as has occurred in Colombia in recent years. It is quite impossible to know the exact size of this group, but if all Protestant church members, families and recognized "sympathizers" were included, the total number would undoubtedly reach some two and a half millions. If one compares the evangelical community in Spain, which totals no more than 20,000, it is not difficult to see why the revision of the Reina-Valera text, begun in 1950 and to be completed in the spring of 1957, should have been undertaken primarily with Latin American leadership.

The revision of the Reina-Valera Bible involved several serious problems, largely due to the fact that there had been throughout the years a certain degree of misunderstanding about the current text. Most people have presumed that the text which they had was a word-for-word printing of the Valera revision of 1604, famous for its literary quality and truly in the tradition of the Golden Age of Spanish literature. However, the present Valera text has undergone several different revisions, all of them made in a somewhat haphazard manner, but resulting in a total of more than 100,000 changes of spelling, grammatical forms, punctuation and word order, and more than 60,000 changes in wording. Almost all evangelicals in Latin America recognised the need of making some further changes, for some of the words in the present text have come to have vulgar connotations, some are entirely misleading, and others are quite meaningless. Nevertheless, there was apprehension about undertaking to touch the "untouchable"—to change the heritage of several centuries.

Haitian French and Creole

Everyone speaks Creole in Haiti—from the President of the Republic down to the barefooted peasant. About five per cent. of the population also speaks French—a little over-elegant, and sprinkled with eighteenth century idioms and words. But officially Haiti is French-speaking and all the schools are taught in French, despite the fact that for most children the process of going to school is a formidable experience involving trying to learn what is essentially a foreign language. Many children attend school for only a year or so, and though they may learn the alphabet and memorize a primer, they can be considered as literate only by the wildest stretch of the imagination. Furthermore, back in their homes in the villages, without books, magazines, papers or any incentive to read, they soon become totally illiterate.

In view of these tragic facts it is no wonder that within recent years serious efforts have been made to promote adult literacy in Creole. A New Testament was published by the Haitian Bible Society, sponsored by an independent Haitian Christian worker, Mr. A. Bonhomme. The American Bible Society has also published several books in Haitian Creole and by the end of 1957 there is scheduled for completion a complete New Testament and Psalms.

However, the Haitian Creole, despite the fact that it is the language of everyone, does not have the requisite prestige to make it fully acceptable to all the people. Even some of the most poorly educated feel the necessity of having the Bible in French, even though they may not be able to understand it. To meet the needs of these people, a group associated with the American Baptist Seminary in the northern part of the country is undertaking to produce a New Testament in very simple French, following somewhat the principles employed in a parallel project, namely, the production of a New Testament in "popular Spanish" designed especially to meet the requirements of new literates and those whose knowledge of traditional Spanish is limited.

Indian languages

For those whose impressions of Latin America are based on scanty references to ancient civilizations or Amazonian "savages", it may come as a distinct surprise to learn that there are between six and seven million Indians in Latin America, speaking well over 250 mutually unintelligible languages and dialects. In Mexico alone there are fifty-one such language groups, according to official government statistics. Many of these "tribes" consist of dialect groups which cannot understand each other at all, and in other instances more closely related dialects are still so different that it is quite impossible to employ a single translation for the different language communities.

In Guatemala there are approximately a score of significant Indian tribes, which constitute fully 65 per cent. of the entire population of the country. In the rest of Central America there are, with the exception of the Miskitos of Nicaragua and Honduras, only small scattered remnants of what were earlier much more extensive groups. The Miskitos, however, are a very important group, having their own New Testament, hymn book, catechism and numerous other publications, put out by the Moravian Mission, which through the years has developed what is without doubt the most outstanding piece of Indian work in the western hemisphere.

In South America there are at least 200 different language groups. Some of these number as many as two million speakers, e.g. Bolivian Quechua. Several include close to a million speakers, e.g. Aymara, Ecuadorian Quechua, Cuzco Quechua, but most of the Indian tribes of South America are very small. In fact, in the Amazon river valley most of the tribes number a thousand or less. Some estimates have even put the entire Indian population of Amazonia at less than 100,000 people, divided into as many as 200 different tribes and tribelets.

Missionary work among the Indians of Latin America has presented some very serious difficulties, and these have, of course, been reflected in the amount of Bible translating work which has been done through the years. The inaccessibility of many of the groups has posed practical problems of transportation and housing. Often the hostile attitudes of governments and the opposition of unscrupulous exploiters of the Indians have aggravated the difficulties. Further-

more, in many instances the Indians have lived in a very dependent relationship to the large land-owner, the mining company, or the local trader. Any effective approach to the Indian has had to include these other groups and persons, but they have been exceedingly difficult to reach, since their position and economic well-being depends so largely upon practices in conflict with the Gospel.

Another serious problem for the missionary translator has been the relative difficulty of the indigenous languages in Latin America. Not only are the structures in many instances amazingly complex, but there is an unbelievable diversity of linguistic types. In the southern part of Mexico alone one can find as many diverse language families and types of structure as in the whole of Africa, with its approximately 800 languages.

But more serious than even the difficulty of language and the inaccessibility of the people because of outward circumstances, is the barrier which the people themselves have raised toward the outside. Because of the pressures of foreign conquest and economic exploitation, their only cultural defence consisted in retreat and constant vigilance against outside influences. With this attitude has also come cultural stagnation and morbidity, exhibited so often in excessive alcoholism and total indifference to what we would regard as constructive influences.

In view of these serious difficulties posed by Indian work in so many parts of Latin America it is little wonder that in the past there have been proportionately fewer translations produced than in other areas of the world with a similarly large number of languages. However, this situation is being remedied quite rapidly. At present there are at least 350 missionaries (of whom a relatively high percentage belong to the Wycliffe Bible Translators) giving all or most of their time towards projects principally designed to give these people the Scriptures in their own languages. Already within the last 10 years the American and British Bible Societies have published in 24 languages, which up to that time had had nothing of the Bible. Other agencies have accounted for publications in at least 11 more languages. In the previous ten years there were publications in only 7 languages.

This dynamic growth in the number of translations published for Latin America is only one aspect of the astounding development of the evangelical movement in the New World, south of the Rio Grande. If, as in the past, it has been possible to judge the spiritual vitality of a church by noting the number of translations and revisions being made and distributed, we can be assured of a vigorous and dynamic church in this strategic part of the world.

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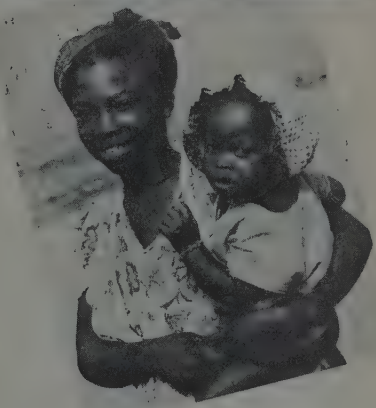

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1. Masai married women, Tanganyika. 2. Inside an Elizabethville home, Belgian Congo. 3. Descendants of Arab slave traders, Tanganyika. 4. Bakongo mother and child, Belgian Congo. 5. Batshioko village chief, Belgian Congo. 6. The drum calls the African to church.

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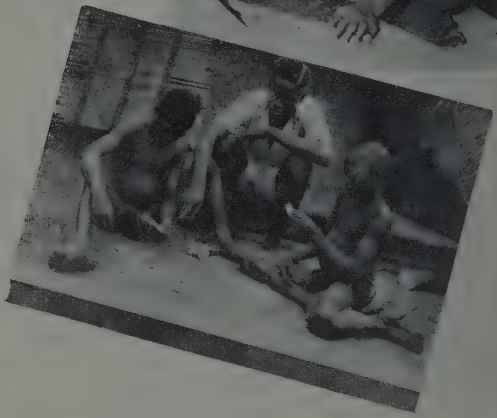

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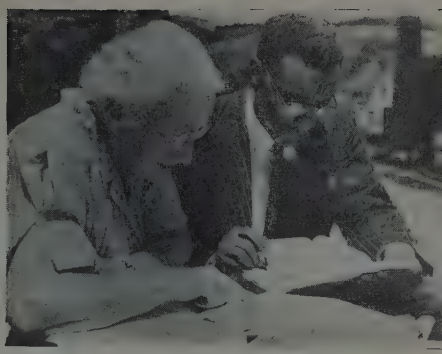
1. Belgian Congo children at school. 2. Infants' school, Belgian Congo. 3. Belgian Cong
geography lesson. 4. Bassa boys learning to read, Liberia. 5. Literacy class, Afric
6. Ethiopian boy learning to read.



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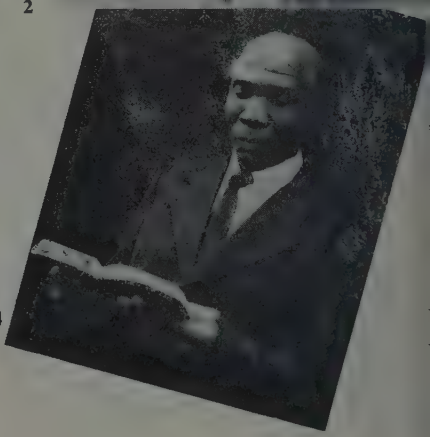
1. Translators at work on the Bible in Bali, Cameroons. 2. Translating the Kamba Scriptures, Kenya. 3. Algerian colporteur. 4. Colporteur in Nairobi and district, Kenya. 5. Colporteur selling Bible to camel drivers in Egypt. 6. Chigogo New Testaments arrive, Tanganyika.

2



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1. Makerere women students with their Bibles, Uganda. **2**. African girl reading the Scriptures. **3**. East African family reading the Bible. **4**. Elder of the church reading his Kamba New Testament, Kenya. **5**. African pastor reading at the lectern. **6**. African girl reading the Swahili Bible.

The photographs in this Supplement are from the U.B.S./B.F.B.S. Photographic Library.

In the steps of St. Thomas

William C. Somerville

Some Reflections on the meeting of the U.B.S. Standing Committee in Bandung, Indonesia

WE HAVE HAD many books and films on how the Bible came to the West. One of the points made at the meeting of the Standing Committee of the United Bible Societies along with members of staff in Far Eastern agencies, was that there should be prepared a new film: "The Bible in Asia", remembering that the Bible originated in Asia, and that its spread eastwards from Palestine began in the first century A.D.

We were reminded directly of the work of St. Thomas in carrying the Gospel to India through the presence with us of Bishop Jacob, who has such a close connection with the leaders of the church founded by St. Thomas, the Syrian Christian Church although he is himself a Bishop of the union "Church of South India". Another reminder so far as I myself was concerned was provided by the invitation I received while in Singapore to speak to the members of the Mar Thoma congregation there, which I found a most interesting experience. I had yet another reminder a week or two later, when I was in Serampore College in India and met Principal Abraham, himself a minister of the Mar Thoma Church. Dr. Abraham has more than once explained that, although the Syrian Christian Church has had a very long history in South India, it was only when the Bible was translated into Malayalam, the language of the people, that the Church awoke to the full realisation of its spiritual heritage and of its responsibility to carry the Gospel to non-Christian neighbours, whether in India or overseas. This brought home to me once again the importance of the work for which the Bible Societies take responsibility, and I was very happy to learn that the Mar Thoma Church to-day is both a Bible-loving and a Bible-propagating Church.

Churches and Bible Society in India

Bishop Jacob and Mr. Mahanty, the General Secretary of the Bible Society of India and Ceylon, each took his full share in the discussions and deliberations at the meetings in Bandung. I do not think those who were present will readily forget the very strong plea they made, with particular reference to the position of the Christian Church in India at the present time. They spoke of difficulties due to the revival of the Hindu religion and to the aim of so many Hindus to make their religion the national religion of India. We were told of the barriers that were sometimes placed in the way of entry of missionaries into border areas, and we heard too of the financial complications which had to be surmounted in the receiving of foreign grants for work in India. Bishop Jacob and Mr. Mahanty were very clear in their own minds, however, that the Christian Church in India to-day should not allow itself to be depressed because of these *difficulties*, but should rather concentrate on the numerous and promising *opportunities* opening before it for the spread of the Gospel both in its printed form and by

word of mouth. The Christian Church need not give way to *fear* in the face of so many adverse circumstances; its real need was for deeper *faith* in God, so that it might go forward joyfully and in a spirit of true dedication.

In reminding us of the extent of the task in India, Mr. Mahanty mentioned that there are now at least 70 million literate people in India and that this number is increasing by 5 million each year. It is clear, therefore, that the total number of Scriptures circulated by the Bible Society of India and Ceylon—1 million copies—is quite inadequate, and a call to advance this number of 15 million copies annually is being made. In order to distribute so many there is only one agency at all adequate to the task, nothing less than the whole Protestant Church, with its 8 million members! We were told that in some areas of India, notably North-East India and South India, the Church is relatively strong and able to undertake the task of distributing Scriptures as part of its evangelistic effort. In many other parts of India, however, the Church is still very weak. Special help was asked for to provide a new Bible centre in mid-India, one of these particularly needy areas. It was gratifying that a number of offers of help towards this project was immediately forthcoming from those present.

Indonesia—the host country

As host Society the Indonesian Bible Society deserves the very warmest thanks for the way in which the arrangements for the Conference were made and carried through. We who visited Indonesia for the first time were greatly struck by the friendliness of the Indonesian people. It is true that there were many formalities to be observed in obtaining both entrance visas and exit permits, but we came to realise that these were due to the complicated procedure felt necessary at present by the Government, and not to any feeling that visitors were unwelcome. On all sides we received the greatest courtesy and helpfulness.

To mark the opening of our Conference the Indonesian Bible Society arranged a reception in Djakarta, and it was significant that the Mayor of Djakarta, the Minister of Trade, and leading members of the University of Djakarta were glad to take part in what was a very representative gathering. There is quite evidently a great deal of goodwill and courtesy as between Moslem and Christian, and it is significant that Indonesia provides the only example in the world where a comparatively large Christian Church has grown up in a community which was formerly entirely Moslem. The chairman at this reception was Dr. Mulia, Principal of the Djakarta Theological College in which the meeting was held. He was also a member of our Conference in Bandung and made a notable contribution to our discussions. It was challenging to discover that in the Batak Church in Sumatra, to which Dr. Mulia belongs, the attendance on Sundays averages ninety per cent. of the members and adherents!

The General Secretary of the Indonesian Bible Society, Mr. Khouw, also took a notable part in our Conference, though he had a great deal of administrative work to attend to, particularly relating to travel arrangements for the delegates present. Mr. Khouw was in sole charge of the Bible Society interests in Indonesia during the years of the Japanese occupation, and we realised when we got to know him that it was in the Providence of God that such a modest but capable person had been there during those difficult years. Since the meeting of the United Bible Societies in Eastbourne in 1954, the Indonesian Bible Society had been a full and independent member of the U.B.S.

We heard of the needs of Indonesia at the present time for increased printing facilities, and for a new Bible House in Medan, and plans for the provision of the necessary funds were discussed.

Other members of the Indonesian Bible Society whom we met included Mr. Ihromi and Mr. Naipospos, both of whom are doing translation and revision work in important Indonesian languages. I first met Mr. Naipospos in the office in Djakarta where I found him sitting at a large table with eight or nine different translations round about him, preparing the first draft of the revised Old Testament in Indonesian. Among those who are helping in this task is Professor Barth of the Theological College in Djakarta, a son of Dr. Karl Barth.

The work in other S.E. Asian countries

There is no room to record more than a sentence or two of what the others present at the Conference had to say about needs and opportunities in their particular territories. Mr. Ming Chao told us of Thailand with its strong Buddhist culture and a Church which is still very small relative to the total population. Yet colporteurs are active and there are many encouraging signs that the Scriptures are being read by people of many different walks of life. Dr. Mortensen also spoke of Thailand and then went on to describe his work for the Chinese "in dispersion". Dr. Mortensen believes that there are many ways in which he can help people in different countries in the South-East Asia area in their work among Chinese people, for example, by passing on information and by arranging for refresher courses for colporteurs. Canon Arrowsmith spoke of language complications in New Guinea, where there are at least 500 different languages and dialects, in only a few of which is any part of the Scriptures available at present. Mr. Douglas Lancashire described the position in Hong Kong and Formosa, explaining that Hong Kong at present seems to offer unique facilities for printing and publication, while in Formosa the provision of Scriptures and their distribution by bookshops and colporteurs is going forward in a most encouraging fashion. He looked forward to the day in the not too distant future when a colportage van would be in operation there. Mr. Ian Morrison spoke of the work in Malaya and Singapore, describing the work of the colporteurs, some of whom were using small three-wheeled motor-driven vans which were comparatively inexpensive, and yet which could accommodate a useful stock of Scriptures.

Sharing resources for world needs

From the Societies which have the longest tradition of missionary activity came Dr. Platt of the British and Foreign Bible Society, Dr. Holmgren of the American Bible Society, Baron van Tuyll of the Netherlands Bible Society and myself. Dr. Platt, as chairman of the Standing Committee of the U.B.S., was chairman of our Conference, and made it clear that his Society is most anxious to give help and encouragement to the younger Bible Societies as they take an increasing share in all that is going on in their areas. Dr. Holmgren contributed in lively fashion to our discussions, and was able to offer his Society's help with a number of specific projects. Baron van Tuyll also offered his Society's help where it could be used to advantage. He was always present in the background to help with the arrangements for our meetings, though he was glad to make it clear that the Indonesian Bible Society was the real host. I myself, speaking for the National Bible Society of Scotland, was also glad to assure the Conference that the N.B.S.S. would hear of special needs with interest and would consider ways in which help might be given to meet them.

The business of the meeting

As the person most responsible for the preparation of business as well as for carrying through resolutions and decisions, Monsieur Olivier Béguin, General Secretary of the United Bible Societies, gave us every assistance; and I am sure that all present, like myself, felt happier than ever that he is at the helm of the U.B.S. ship.

We were all most indebted to Dr. Winburn Thomas of the Missionary Commission of the Indonesian National Christian Council, who kept our minutes and also assisted in many ways in questions of transport and travel.

It was a very great disappointment to us that circumstances prevented the Rev. Young Bin Im of the Korean Bible Society, the Rev. T. Miyakoda of the Japan Bible Society and the Rev. Angel Taglucop of the Philippines Agency from being with us.

For myself I can say that I returned from Bandung feeling greatly encouraged by what is being done and challenged by what still remains undone. It was certainly the hope of those present at Bandung that more Bible Societies should take some share in the work in areas where the Christian Church is in a small minority. As Mr. Mahanty reminded us, the task cannot be fully undertaken until everyone plays his full part in it. The story of the Bible in Asia is far from complete, and we believe the finest chapters still lie in the future.

Statement from Conference of The Bible Society Secretaries and Agents at Work in South-East Asia

held at Bandung, Indonesia,

September 25th to October 1st, 1956

ON THE OCCASION of the U.B.S. Standing Committee held in Bandung, Indonesia, it was thought wise to hold a simultaneous Conference of local Bible Society secretaries in Asia. With representatives of the American Bible Society, the British and Foreign Bible Society, the National Bible Society of Scotland, the Netherlands Bible Society and the B.F.B.S. in Australia, delegates from the Indonesian Bible Society and the Bible Society of India and Ceylon, and the U.B.S. General Secretary came together to discuss the work and were joined by the secretaries from Hong Kong, Thailand and Malaya. Naturally considerable time was devoted to the problems and opportunities which Bible Societies encounter in East and South-East Asia to-day, though to our regret the delegates from Japan, Korea and the Philippines were prevented from attending.

The following notes are intended as a mere outline of the challenging picture which presented itself to those attending the Conference. We wish we could convey the deep sense of urgency which came to us in Bandung. We felt a rather disturbing consciousness that nothing short of our utmost efforts in initiative and flexibility for our work could enable the local Bible Societies to face up to the task which they ought at this time to be undertaking.

The immensity of Asia

Indeed, we felt that "Asia itself" came to us at Bandung with the startling dimensions of its need. Its total population is estimated at approximately 1,300 million—about half of the population of the world. Yet only about one per cent. of the people are evangelical Christians. Roman Catholics number 20 millions (mainly in the Philippines) and non-Roman Christians 13 millions. Even in Korea, the country with the highest percentace of non-Roman Christians, the evangelical forces represent only one-twentieth part of the population.

We thought of the population of Indonesia, which is approximately 80 millions—considerably larger than that of Germany or Brazil, double that of England or France, equal to about half of the estimated population of Africa. We wondered how Bible Society efforts in these respective lands compared. We were reminded that India claims an annual increase of population of nearly 5 million and that our annual circulation there is only one million Scriptures. Japan counts 30 million young people below the age of sixteen. The Philippines, Burma and Thailand each have a population of about 20 million—more than the combined populations of the Scandinavian countries and Finland! The countries of Asia have rightly been described as being high in fertility and with a high but declining mortality. Yet we had to face the fact that due to these very circumstances there is crushing poverty and infinite hardship with increasing pressure on the means of livelihood. It appears probable that the bulk of the world's want is in Asia. We were reminded that scores of thousands of Indian homes are kept going on an income of less than £20 a year.

Yet despite these factors in the situation, we see a kind of grim determination on the part of these people to seek the benefits of a good life in ample food, adequate shelter, scientific medicine, basic education and political freedom—benefits which for long have been the sole prerogatives of the West. Related to all this in modern Asia there is a new self-respect and a new determination for full nationhood. New ideas of human dignity and freedom have set in motion what is quite a revolutionary process and this has begun to transform the political, social, economic and even religious life of whole peoples of the East. Whether we recognise it or not, here is revolution, and at Bandung we felt that it was our duty as Bible Societies to make the most of the opportunities which this revolutionary mood of transition and change uniquely affords.

The churches in Asia

Changes of a similar kind have been taking place in the life of the churches in Asia. The churches which are emerging and with which it is our privilege to work in the distribution of the Scriptures, though identical in their central purpose and redemptive message, are not the churches of Morrison and Carey, nor even of the World Missionary Conferences of Jerusalem (1928) and Madras (1938). They are now churches with new names and new faces, called "The United Church of Japan", "The United Church of Christ in the Philippines", "The Church of South India", "The United Church of Christ in Thailand", and the like.

There are also new forces at work in the churches. For one thing, the emphasis is on unity and co-operation and in this they find the Bible Society a kindred spirit and welcome agency in their experiments in ecumenicity. Again, they are almost completely Asian in their membership and leadership. There

is a new urgency is their desire to take a greater part in their own programmes; to train their own leaders; to devise their own policies; to fulfil in their own way the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. The Bible Society in these lands will be relevant to their life only as it shares in this new spirit.

Some outstanding sections of the church in Asia may also be described as highly evangelistic in spirit and missionary in motive. The older distinction between church and missions in those lands is rapidly disappearing. We see the churches of these various countries undertaking preaching missions and evangelistic efforts among their own people and even missionary witness among peoples of neighbouring lands.

At the same time, Christianity is severely challenged by the revival of traditional Asian religions. In some of these countries political leaders are active in restoring ancient faiths in support of nationalism; yet to large sections of Asia, Christianity is the religion of the West—the religion of the peoples who sometimes ruled them for centuries. Those who reject the West therefore often reject Christianity and the Bible also. Bible colporteurs meet the objection, "Oh, that is a book of the West; it is of no use to us". Sometimes, too, the spread of Christianity and the distribution of the Bible are regarded as attempts to weaken the people's stand against the West and its institutions. A Japanese coal miner said, "Yes, the Bible is good, but we want stronger medicine to stimulate ourselves in our revolt. The Bible is not sufficient for this purpose".

The organisers and priests of these ancient religions have themselves become more active. They have learned from Christianity and its missionary methods. Hindu missionaries travel in Malaya. Mahayana Buddhists operate a clinic and homes for the aged in Hong Kong. Hindu Scriptures are now being mass-produced in India. A Koran Society for the promotion of the Moslem holy book has just been founded in Indonesia.

It is in this context that the Asian churches have to bear their witness, yet they remain small minorities desperately short of leadership and of wealth. They are in great need of help, and for some years this help must come largely from without. But such aid will only be effective if it is given with humility and uncalculating love. We of the West ought not to aim at planting *our* church and *our* institutions in Asia or to take pride because they are *ours*. Surely our hope is to plant Christ's Church amongst Asians with the full understanding that under Him it is *theirs*.

The urgency of Scripture needs

On the basis of the above analysis of the situation facing us, and in view of the exceptionally challenging character of present conditions in Asia, we of the Bible Societies feel the imperative necessity of accelerating Bible Society service and supplies to the people of these lands, if we are faithfully to discharge our calling. For 150 years we have performed with fidelity our single stated purpose of bringing the Scriptures to the people of these lands in the languages they can best understand and at prices which they can afford. Our record of achievement is undoubtedly impressive and there is nothing in the contemporary scene which alters that main objective. Nevertheless we feel that the urgency of the present situation impels us to redouble our efforts in this great task and to apply more skilled and effective means to the business at hand.

It is our conviction that, while giving due recognition to timing and local circumstances, serious consideration must also be given to an acceleration in the

processes of devolution in Bible Society organisation in East and South-East Asia, so that there may be increasing local administrative prerogatives. The Societies and Agencies working in these areas of rapid social and cultural change must move with power and speed as changing opportunities and obligations confront them. Again, if real local interest and support of the Bible Society is to be forthcoming, it will largely be because the local churches are able to bring their tribute to a Society in whose policies and procedures they have a real part and a decisive voice.

We must also accelerate our processes of thoughtful planning. It is a surprising fact that the Bible Societies still distribute fewer Scriptures in missionary continents such as Asia and Africa (where they are almost exclusively responsible for Scripture distribution) than in lands like Britain or the U.S.A., where, alongside their work, there are other great Scripture publishing houses and university presses, with many thousands of churches and other Christian agencies at work. The fact is that in areas of greatest missionary need, such as Asia and Africa, the Societies distribute annually only one item of Scripture for every 154 people ; whereas in the Protestant countries of northern Europe, the English-speaking dominions, Greece and the United States (all countries of a high percentage of Christians) the Societies issue one for every 28 people.

Faced thus with a new urgency and a vast need, we felt that the work of the Societies themselves, particularly the "sending Societies", needed greater integration. If, for instance, the Societies historically responsible for the work in any of these missionary countries feel unable, either through lack of funds or due to difficulties of production or distribution, to cope with the increased requirements, then wise and carefully planned co-operation between the Societies, through the U.B.S., might make it possible for other Societies to help with fresh resources. Such planning is surely the call of God to us in our day; nor does it only involve finance. It may be that production facilities, additional buildings and even additional personnel will be required. Help given to-day to Asia may be worth ten times the same help given in a few years' time. It was a prominent Indian Bible Society worker who said, "Whereas our present annual circulation in India is one million, if we are really to do the job we ought to be thinking in terms of a 15 million circulation each year". He was doubtless thinking in terms of the spread of literacy and the increasing population.

It was also suggested that there might be improvements in the production of the "physical book" we provide—in its typography; in speeding up revision processes; in preparing indigenous translators; in format and in appearance; in illustrations congenial to local cultural backgrounds and habits; by fixing prices that make its purchase easy; by giving to it adequate publicity; in having trained colporteurs, directors of colportage work and Bible vans on the road; in having more reference Bibles, section headings and the like. It was felt that these practical tools for helping simple men to use and understand the Bible became, under God, *our* responsibility if we are to help open up the Book for those to whom we give it. To-day thousands of simple village evangelists, catechists and teachers are the leaders in the Christian crusade and often the Bible is their *only* available book.

The challenge to the Bible Societies

The immensity of the tasks in modern Asia could have a somewhat paralyzing effect upon us, but at Bandung we felt, on the contrary, that they too were charged with a meaning and a message for the Bible Societies. There came upon

us a sense of expectation of what, in the Providence of God, lay in store for the work in Asia. In the sharing of our experiences and common faith with our Asian fellow-workers, we felt a new understanding of God's grace and power and a new awareness that the future is in His hands. And because of the isolation of our workers in that area we felt that more opportunities for contact between Bible Societies and Agencies there are one of their deeper needs in present circumstances. The exchange of visits between various countries and the coming together in regional conferences would help our colleagues to make a clearer appraisal of the opportunities before them and us, and of the practical ways and means of grasping them.

Despite all we have written here concerning Asia, we do, of course, recognise that Asia's problems are not unique. Our attention was concentrated on the needs of that vast continent; yet we also rejoiced to hear of service in other parts of the world. We remained aware that wherever God has called us in the service of His Word, we share in one global task. But in that world task we realised that appraisals, policies, programmes remain lifeless things unless they reflect Christ's mind and purpose for the world. We cannot fulfil our task unless, through prayer and intercession, we deepen and strengthen our personal communion with Christ Jesus, the living Word, until His mind and purpose become ours.

News from All The World

Angola

The Rev. A. W. Marthinson, B.F.B.S. Agent for the Congo Basin, has again toured Angola (see BULLETIN No. 24, p.33). He covered over 4,000 miles last autumn and visited 22 missionary stations belonging to the four main ethnical groups in the area—the Kikongo, the Kimbundu, the Umbundu and the Luchasi.

"The Church of God", Mr. Marthinson writes, "is growing fast in Angola. In spite of the impossibility of additional stations being opened, the 9 missions are all advancing. The indigenous church is gradually taking over the evangelisation of the untouched areas. The growth of the Church has been largely due to the zeal and activity of the native Christians. In spite of various difficulties, such as obtaining permits for new stations, shortage of staff, etc., the work is making remarkable progress. No subsidies are granted for schools or hospitals, but nevertheless tens of thousands of pupils are being educated at the missions. The opportunities are unique. The indigenous church is becoming more mature. It is therefore essential that adequate supplies of the Holy Book are made available. The situation here, as in the Congo, is very challenging. What are they to read to-morrow?"

In all fields, Mr. Marthinson reports, the Bible "is wanted in tens of thousands", the groups are "in great need of more Scriptures and at the earliest possible date", and "the demand for the Scriptures is heartbreaking". In San Salvador, in the Kikongo area, Mr. Marthinson addressed a big gathering of people: "It was here", he said, "that the well-known linguist, Holman Bentley,

translated the Kikongo New Testament, the first book to be published by the B.F.B.S. for this part of Africa. 1957 will be the 60th anniversary of the publishing of this book. Can we ever imagine what an influence on the whole Kikongo tribe in Angola and also in some parts of the Belgian Congo, this book has had in the past and is still having to-day? The eyes of the people literally shone with joy as they lifted up their well-worn Bibles and New Testaments.

"When will there be more supplies of complete Bibles arriving?" was a question I faced ever so many times. I tried to explain the enormous programme our Society is undertaking and the need for support. I had to be careful not to say much about their co-operation in distributing the Word of God, as we have no books available for them. However, I could assure them that, as our Society has done so faithfully in the past, so too in the future will it do its utmost to fill the needs of the Kikongo people for the greatest Book of all.

"At the end of the most inspiring meeting, one of the elders came up on the platform and thanked the Bible Society for all the Bibles and New Testaments it had sent during many years. As a token of their warm appreciation for all they have received, I was presented with a gift of five pounds to help in the furtherance of the Gospel. I do wish some of the Bible Society friends who for years have laboured for our Society, could have been present".

A reprint of the Kikongo Bible is on its way; the New Testament is available in Kimbundu, Umbundu and Chokwe, as well as several books of the Old Testament in all three of these languages, work being continued on the rapid completion of the Old Testament. For the Luchasi people, the complete Bible is now in the hands of the printer, to be published as a diglot (Luchasi-Portuguese) edition, the first complete Bible to appear in that form in Africa.

China

The Rev. Canon H. M. Arrowsmith paid a visit to the *China Bible Society* in Shanghai, while visiting China with an Australian Church delegation. In a letter written from China to London, Canon Arrowsmith summarizes his impressions after the visit as follows: "I believe that the China Bible Society has taken firm and deep root in the soul of the Chinese Church. There is as yet an acknowledged weakness and lack of maturity . . . . but I believe the prospects are good, and I have hopes for a growing strength of organisation, for closer co-operation with the Church and a growing consciousness of the need for wider distribution of the Scriptures".

England

Several important new editions have been produced by the *British and Foreign Bible Society* during the autumn:

The Mende New Testament—the Christian community numbers more than 10,000 in a group of over one million people in Sierra Leone. The first Portions in Mende appeared over a hundred years ago. Work is now being done on the translation of the Old Testament;

The Nanjeri New Testament—missionary work started only fifteen years ago among that tribe, south of Lake Tchad. Ten years ago there were only 40 readers. Now there are 3,000 and a Christian community of 5,000;

The Bambara New Testament and Psalms—the New Testament is a revision, the Psalms a first translation. Bambara is widely spoken in the

French Sudan, being used as a lingua franca by over one and a half million people. The Old Testament translation is in preparation;

The Ijo Brass Bible—the first Gospel was published seventy years ago, the New Testament thirty years ago. There are about 10,000 Christians speaking that language in the Niger Delta. The translation has been done by the Rev. D. O. Ockiya, an African pastor;

The Marovo Bible—this language is spoken in the Solomon Islands by a tribe of former head-hunters numbering only a few thousand members. The first Gospel was published a quarter of a century ago;

The Bemba Bible—a language which is widely used in the Copper Belt in Northern Rhodesia. The New Testament appeared 40 years ago. This Bible appears under the joint imprint of the B.F.B.S. and the National Bible Society of Scotland.

The revised Amharic New Testament, prepared by two Ethiopian scholars appointed by the Emperor and one missionary designated by the B.F.B.S., has also come off the press. The manuscript was set up in type at the Royal Press in Addis Ababa and art pulls sent to London, from which the edition has been printed by photographic process. References have been included for the first time.

Germany

The *Stuttgart Bible Society* has circulated about 50,000 Scripture Portions for the blind since it started production for the blind in the first half of the 19th century. Uncial script was used at first, before Braille came into general use. Recently the Stuttgart Bible Society produced a Braille edition of its Jubilee Bible (with notes and comments). Three further books of the Old Testament in the Menge translation have been issued during the autumn, bringing the total to 15 books, from Genesis to Job. It is hoped that the whole Bible in the Menge tanslation will be ready for the blind in two or three years' time. The New Testament has already been published in that translation. The printing of the Stuttgart editions for the blind is carried out by blind people themselves, at the blind institute.

*

The Stuttgart Bible Society last autumn issued its first edition of the new revision of the Luther text. The *Union of Evangelical Bible Societies in Germany* approved the new version at its annual meeting last June. At the end of the same month the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany (the federation of all Landeskirchen) also accepted the proposed text and recommended it to its member churches for adoption and use in church services, as well as in Christian education. Two trial editions of the Testament had been circulated in 1938 and 1949. Further revision work was subsequently carried out, under the chairmanship of Bishop Dibelius, by a commission appointed in part by the Verband and in part by the E.K.D. in 1952. The present revision is considered as a "mid-way" modernisation of the text.

The edition issued by the Stuttgart Bible Society has been set in Roman type, right across the page, with references indicated in the margins. The binding is in light-coloured linen. The text occupies about 544 pages; a 32-page appendix, prepared by Prelate Th. Schlatter, gives some chronological data, notes on difficult words, brief introductory notes to each book of the New Testament, etc. Editions of the same text are also in preparation in Eastern Germany.

*

A working group (Arbeitskreis) for *Bibelmission* has been created in

Hamburg in support of Bible distribution work in that city. The local Bible Society and various home mission organisations are members of the group, which is chaired by Pastor Alexander Müller of the City Mission. The group is to give full backing to the work of the B.F.B.S. colporteur at work in Hamburg and to the deaconess also engaged in Bible distribution.

*

The need for closer co-operation between Bible Societies and the home mission organisations was unanimously recognised at the one-day session of the *Evangelisches Bibelwerk* (Federation of Bible Societies of Eastern Germany) and of the Volksmission (People's Mission), held last October in Berlin. The main problem to-day, it was stated, is not so much that of supplying enough Scriptures, but of making the Bible a book which is read and studied. The importance of Bible study as a follow-up of evangelistic efforts was also strongly underlined. The co-operation of the Bible Societies is mainly requested in the form of the publication of one or two modern translations, in the production of Scriptures with commentaries and in the organisation of Bible Weeks and of Bible correspondence courses. The possibility of appointing Bible missionaries and developing voluntary Scripture distribution was also examined, and the responsibility of the churches and home mission organisations in that field was stressed.

Shortly after that meeting, Dr. K. Zabel, General Secretary of the Bibelwerk, had the opportunity of addressing a meeting of student pastors of the D.D.R.* The majority of the pastors agreed to encourage their student congregations once during the year to visit all the homes in one section of their city, offering Scriptures or urging people to make better use of the copies they might already have in their homes.

* German Democratic Republic

Dr. Zabel also reports that two churches (Landeskirchen) have agreed to give the New Testament to all their catechumens in 1957. This means that copies of the Word of God will find their way into families which have very little contact with the Church.

*

The *Altenburg Bible Society* has appointed a new commission to prepare an edition of the Bible with commentaries from the writings of the Church fathers. This edition will be intended not only for pastors and theologians, but should be of service to all people in their study of the Word of God. It should combine general understandability with scientific exactitude. The first volume will appear in 1958.

Hungary

A further instalment of the new Hungarian revision, Ezra/Nehemiah/Esther, had just been issued in a tentative edition before the recent revolutionary events in Hungary.

Indo-China

The General Committee of the B.F.B.S. has authorised the purchase of two Bible depots in Indo-China, one in Saigon (Vietnam) and the other in Phnom Penh (Cambodia). The work, which, under French administration, could be organised in a unified way, has now to be decentralised since each of the three countries (Laos, Cambodia and South Vietnam) have worked out their own customs and currency arrangements, and postal relations from State to State are limited. There are colporteurs working in the three States. Bible work in (communist) North Vietnam is at a standstill. It is interesting to know that one of the chief advisers of M. D. Diehm, the South Vietnam President, is the Society's former depot keeper in Saigon, while his predecessor in the depot is now in the Vietnam Embassy in Washington.

Indonesia

Nine colportage leaders are being trained for the *Indonesian Bible Society* in the theological school of the Hervormde Church in Djokjakarta. It is a two-year course. These leaders come from various parts and churches of the country and are to serve in their own areas in organising Bible distribution locally, helping the churches in their efforts to spread the Bible and encourage the support of the Society by the churches.

With the rapid increase of literacy, particularly among young people, great opportunities are opening up for wider circulation of the Holy Scriptures. At the present moment the church evangelists take the largest share in this circulation. The Bible Society has already been asked to organise refresher courses for them in some areas.

Although the churches' support for the Society has increased by over six times in the last few years, much of the effort of the staff to-day is devoted to the increase of that support, and churches which hitherto had not contributed to the work have recently begun to do so. The Society also plans to enlist an increasing number of individual contributing members.

One of the main problems the Society has to face is that of the supply of books. The purchase of books from abroad is practically impossible for lack of foreign currencies. Even their importation as gifts meets difficulties. The Society is therefore studying the possibility of having its own printing press or of ordering editions from missionary or commercial presses. The lack of books, due to import difficulties, has considerably hampered the circulation.

Ireland

At a meeting held in Dublin on 3rd October last, the *Hibernian Bible Society* commemorated the 150th anniversary of that Society's foundation. The Rev. Robert Shaw, Vicar of Dungarvan, happened to be in London at the time of the inaugural meeting of the B.F.B.S. in 1804. He had already long been concerned about the scarcity of Scriptures in Ireland. He was then instrumental in the founding of the Dublin Bible Society, the name being changed almost at once to that of Hibernian Bible Society. Since its foundation the Society has circulated more than nine million copies of the Scriptures at home and abroad. Most of its work abroad had been contributed through the B.F.B.S.

Israel

The books of the Old Testament are held in high esteem in modern Israel. At the Bible Week held in Jerusalem last March, 2,500 people took part. The Israeli teachers' union and society for Bible study engaged 40 well-known scholars and specialists in Bible scholarship for that occasion.

There are to-day 1,400 members of the Society for Bible Study, divided into 14 area groups. Alongside its annual conference, which is from time to time devoted to a particular period or book of the Old Testament, the Society arranges lectures, local gatherings and an annual Bible Week. It also publishes a quarterly periodical.

The Bible is not only an essential part of the curriculum in the schools, but it has also found a place in the every-day life of the Jewish people. University teachers come together and discuss biblical subjects during their free time; in evening courses for adult education the Bible is often discussed. The evening readings from the Scriptures over the radio, with commentary, are very popular, and newspapers have discovered that they can advertise cheap Bible productions successfully and gain new readers.

Japan

The *Japan Bible Society* reports that it has reached its circulation target for 1956. Over 1,800,000 copies have been distributed, about two-thirds of which were Gospel Portions, mostly sold by the colporteurs of the Society.

*

The Rev. T. Miyakoda, General Secretary of the Japan Bible Society, on returning from his fifth visit to Okinawa, reports that Bible circulation is on the increase. One of the main factors is the rapid progress of "The Spirit of Jesus Church", whose membership has increased considerably in the course of the last two years, and which has circulated a large number of Bibles in the classical language (Bungotai). The same church is reported to have increased its membership to 50,000 in the last few years in Japan itself.

*

The Japan Bible Society has launched a campaign for the collection of funds for the distribution of free copies of the Kogotai New Testament to families emigrating to South America. By October, over 1,000 copies had been handed over at Kobe and Yokohama ports.

Lebanon

Last September a conference met in Beirut under the auspices of the Bible Society to examine the problem of the revision of the Arabic Bible. There was unanimous agreement that the present text needed revision and full agreement in the principles suggested for the revision. The discussions were based on samples submitted by the two editorial secretaries, Dr. B. Abd-al Malik and Dr. John A. Thomson, who will be responsible for the basic studies, the co-ordination of the work of the Consultative Committee and the final preparation of the manuscript. It is hoped that the revision can be completed within six or seven years.

Malaya

The Ipoh Auxiliary was reconstituted last autumn. It will be responsible for the encouragement of Bible work in that area; supervise the work of the colporteurs among the Chinese and Tamil-speaking groups; encourage the churches to observe an annual Bible Sunday and to set aside an offering for the Bible Society; and foster inter-church relations in the field of Bible Society work.

The auxiliary began its new activity by organising last October a Bible Week, including a Bible exhibition, the showing of films in various churches and the organisation of special services. Over $500 were collected on the first Sunday and a good number of Scriptures have been sold and orders taken during the week by the two colporteurs in attendance.

Mexico

The training course for colportage leaders and field workers specialised in colportage techniques, organised by the American Bible Society for Latin America (see BULLETIN No. 24, 11), was inaugurated on October 1st, under the name "El Instituto Francisco G. Penzotti", in memory of the great Bible Society pioneer in Latin America. The churches of Mexico were well represented at the public inauguration service.

For the first year three students have been accepted, one from Mexico, one from Cuba and one from Argentina. The three are married and their wives are offered the privilege of attending classes as they are able.

Preparation of future trainees will involve a six months' apprenticeship with the Agency in the country of their residence.

It is hoped that, beginning with the second year of the project, from four to six men will be trained each year.

Anticipating that a man will serve the Bible Society from five to ten years following training, yearly classes of five men each should supply the area needs of at least 26 men and not more than 38 men.

Netherlands

A free trip to the Congo next summer is offered by the Youth Department of the Netherlands Bible Society to Dutch boys and girls aged 16-21 years. The aim of the project is to recruit 10,000 new members for the Bible Society between the period December 7th, 1956 to May 1st, 1957. The annual membership fee is a minimum of Florins 2.50.

A special panel of well-known persons in youth organisations and secondary schools has been appointed, who will send to the young people who enlist the most new members a series of questions, e.g. Why did you take part in this membership drive? In what foreign language can you express yourself? Describe your present occupation or school activities. On the basis of the replies, the selection panel will choose two young people to spend three weeks in the Congo in 1957, visiting church, mission and Bible Society work. In addition, the ten other entrants who introduce the largest number of new members to the Bible Society will be given the opportunity of attending the international youth conference being arranged by the European Bible Societies, to be held on the Continent of Europe in 1958.

Scotland

During 1956, the *National Bible Society of Scotland* maintained its help to the "Tell Scotland" Movement by providing 50,000 copies of the Book of Acts in magazine format for distribution during house-to-house visitation campaigns. Many visitors found that these Portions provided an immediate "talking point", and the interesting illustrations in the edition, which was produced by the American Bible Society, helped to make the story of the Church's early years come alive for many.

*

The N.B.S.S. reports that translation work is going on in three languages of North Borneo, in which no Portion has so far been published. They are Kayan, Kenyeh and Kelabit. The work is done by missionaries of the Borneo Evangelical Mission. The latest news about translation work in the Murut language, also in use in North Borneo, indicates that the manuscript of the New Testament has been completed and is being prepared for the printer.

South Africa

The Reformation number of the "Kerkbode", the monthly magazine of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa, is entirely devoted to the Bible, its history, its translations, its influence in Africa, the importance of its proper use for the life of the Church. Several members of the B.F.B.S. staff in South Africa have contributed to the issue.

*

Representatives from over sixty bodies, chiefly church and missionary presses and publishers, gathered last August in Johannesburg to discuss the various aspects of the problem of greater co-operation in the production and distribution of Christian literature for the Bantu peoples. Among the various decisions made, aiming at providing better Christian literature adapted to the needs of the Bantu, the conference also passed the following resolution in recognition of the work of the B.F.B.S.:

"This Conference wishes to place on record its appreciation and gratitude to the British and Foreign Bible Society, who for more than a hundred years, has continued with the transla-

tion of the Word of God in the various Bantu languages and has made it available at a minimal cost. The Conference assures the Society of its continued interest and intercession.

"This Conference urges the British and Foreign Bible Society, in view of the continual shortages which handicap mission work, to arrange for the supply of the Scriptures to South Africa in much greater quantities".

Switzerland

Last autumn the "Action biblique", a movement mainly concerned with the training of Bible colporteurs, the production of Scriptures and their distribution in Switzerland and many other countries, celebrated the 50th anniversary of the ministry in Switzerland of its founder, Mr. Hugh Alexander. The work now maintains fourteen Bible Houses in eight countries and seventeen Bible depositories with about 50 accredited workers.

*

The training course for colporteurs organised by the Belgian Bible Society, the French Bible Committee and the Evangelical Society of Geneva (see BULLETIN No. 27, 1956, p.125), started on 15th October last. Representatives of the organising societies and of the local churches, as well as of various Christian organisations, attended the opening service. There are ten participants in the course.

Thailand

On August 14th and 15th last year a conference on the distribution of the Scriptures among the Chinese of Thailand was held in Bangkok Bible House. Fifty-three delegates were in attendance. Dr. Mortensen writes: "Faced with the challenge of Christianising the more than 3,500,000 ethnic Chinese in Thailand, the delegates applied themselves diligently to discussing the whole theme of the conference — How can the Bible Society and the Chinese churches and the various Christian missions co-operate more fully in the distribution of Scriptures among these ethnic Chinese? Throughout the conference it became evident that all churches and missions represented will, in future, be willing to give an even greater measure of co-operation than in the past".

*

The name of the American Bible Society Thailand Agency has been changed to that of the Thailand Bible House.

*

Work has started on the revision of the Thai Bible. Genesis has been completed and a trial edition of the book is being contemplated, in order to test the reaction of readers and to bring to light any modifications needed in the present principles followed by the revisers.

*

Colporteurs in Thailand have been supplied with bicycles, in order to increase their mobility.

United States of America

In the editorial of the November issue of the *American Bible Society* "Record", Richard H. Ellingson, the secretary in charge of Bible distribution in the U.S.A., gives the following information:

"Every hour of the day and night the Society supplies 1,028 volumes of the Scripture—Bibles, Testaments and Portions — for the 'Mission field: U.S.A.', the annual total exceeding nine million volumes.

"In a recent year 1,490,965 volumes were supplied to approximately one thousand trained volunteer distributors who are at work in assigned areas throughout the country. An additional 2,902,363 volumes were given by the Society as outright grants to chaplains serving the Armed Forces, hospitals and prisons; to home mis-

sionaries, Indian leaders, migrant workers and many others. Churches, individuals and organizations were supplied with 4,606,743 volumes at cost or below cost for their use primarily in outreach into their communities.

"Sixteen secretaries located in district and division offices throughout the country work closely with all Christian leaders who are daily searching out opportunities for effective circulation of the Book. Ministers, missionaries and laymen are constantly encouraged to use their expert talents at finding the Bibleless people 'within the sound of their own church bell' and to supply them with the Bible in whatever language they need.

"Working under the supervision of the district and division secretaries is a corps of volunteer distributors. Their work has one goal—to interest people in possessing and reading the Scriptures. Where they find a home unable to purchase the Book but where it will be read, a gift is made by the district office. Other volunteer workers distribute the Scriptures to convalescent homes and hospitals, county and city jails.

"For in a very real sense, every church, every pastor, every genuine Christian layman has a mission field in his neighbourhood. It may be next door; it may be in the same block or township where the church stands; or it may be in the nearest city or in the scattered settlements outside the city. But it is near at hand, and each person can find the mission field which is close to him".

*

Bibles are now being placed on all of the new Super-G Constellation aeroplanes of Trans-World Airlines. For the last few years TWA has carried Bibles furnished by the American Bible Society, on all TWA flights in the United States.

■

The A.B.S. has supplied the members of the Antarctic "Expedition Deepfreeze II" with a large quantity of Scriptures. Among the volumes given were seven Lectern Bibles inscribed with the names of the seven Antartic bases being established for scientific research during the International Geophysical year.

The Society has also presented 1,200 Bibles and 2,000 New Testaments to the Merchant Marine Library Association, for placing in the libraries of all U.S. merchant vessels as needed. This worthwhile service began during World War II and is greatly appreciated, according to the reports sent to the Society by representatives of the Association.

*

A.B.S. Secretary McElroy has recently experimented with a mailing to 1,000 motel owners suggesting that they use one of the A.B.S. illustrated Portions in their guest rooms, with the rubber stamped inscription "Take this book with you, with the compliments of —— Motel". A similar experiment is being conducted in one hotel in Florida, and it is hoped that other hotels and motels will be encouraged to distribute illustrated Portions in this way.

■

Since the first illustrated Portion in magazine format appeared in 1950, the A.B.S. has issued over 6,600,000 copies of the Scriptures in this form in six different languages: English, Spanish, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese and Greek. Over 120,000 illustrated New Testaments have been circulated since April, 1955.

■

The following survey of the A.B.S. service to the blind in 1956 has been prepared by Miss Ruth Barrett, the A.B.S. secretary responsible for that department of the work:

"Distribution of the Scriptures to the sightless reached a new high in 1956. In response to increasing appeals from the blind around the world, more fingertip readers received the Word of God for the first time in a form which they could read for themselves. Hundreds of bulky volumes went out to the boys and girls in state schools for the blind in the United States and to mission schools of other lands; to an increasing number of ministers, teachers; to the young and old in all walks of life.

"Thousands of Talking Book Records were sent out to those unable to read with their fingertips—to newly blinded veterans and veterans' hospitals and facilities; and to homes for the blind and aged. The entire English Bible is on 170 Talking Book Records, the Old Testament being on 130 records and the New Testament on 40. There were also increasing calls from Latin America for the embossed Scriptures in Spanish and Portuguese Braille, the New Testament in seven volumes in Portuguese Braille being completed for the first time.

"Other new editions of the year included the Japanese Kogotai Braille Bible in 32 volumes.

"During the year there were published for the blind of Korea new editions of the Books of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers in Korean Braille, the New Testament in 10 volumes having been completed earlier.

"Since 1835, when the printing of the first Bible in the Line Letter system was begun, the embossed Scriptures have gone out to the blind in 41 languages and systems. But there are many languages in which not even a small portion of the Bible has been published for those who so need the spiritual light of the Gospel message".

A total of 42,513 volumes and Talking Book Records were circulated to the blind during 1956.

A new English reference Bible is being prepared by the A.B.S., based on the King James text. It is planned to include the following supplementary materials which have been prepared by the department: (1) Section headings with parallel passages; (2) References to quotations, obvious allusions and related historical matter; (3) Certain footnotes, taken directly from the King James Version, which explain the meanings of Hebrew and Greek names in contexts where the point of the passage turns on their etymology. These notes have been checked with both ASV and RSV to ensure their agreement with modern scholarship; (4) The 45,000-line concordance; (5) Maps with gazeteer; (6) Tables of weights and measures.

*

As a result of the expanded work of the Wycliffe Bible Translators and other Scripture translators in Latin America in particular, the A.B.S. is receiving an increasing number of manuscripts for publication. In order to settle divergences of opinion which might arise between the translators and the Society as to the numbers of copies needed to be published, the following agreement has been approved by the Board of the A.B.S. as well as the Board of the Wycliffe Bible Translators:

"With regard to its many publications, the A.B.S. will endeavour to assemble all available relevant information to determine the most suitable number of books to be published in each edition. In the case of translations for small tribes or areas, the A.B.S. will consult the translator and/or his church or mission, as well as other informed persons to aid in determining the number of books to be published.

"The A.B.S. assumes full responsibility for publication costs of its publications except as indicated below.

"In the case of a special edition of a standard item published for an individual or organisation, the full cost of paper, printing, binding, packing and transportation will be borne by the person or organisation placing the order.

"In the case of translations for tribes or areas which the A.B.S. regards as warranting some publications, the A.B.S. will determine the size of the edition which it believes should be published. If the translator, church, or mission which will use these books is not satisfied with the A.B.S. decision regarding the size of the edition to be published and requests the publication of a larger number of books than the A.B.S. deems justified, the A.B.S. will publish the larger quantity only if the person, church, or mission guarantees to purchase from the A.B.S. all copies less fifty remaining in the Society's inventory four years after date of publication. The price to be charged for such balance purchase is the Agency cost price, which includes paper, printing, binding, packing and shipping, but not composition.

"In the case of translations for tribes which are small, or where literacy is undeveloped, or where the Christian community is small, and where the A.B.S. questions the justification for a publication, the A.B.S. will publish only if the translator, his church or mission agrees to purchase at Agency cost price all copies remaining in the Society's inventory four years after publication date".

Miscellaneous

The Division of Studies of the World Council of Churches organised a regional conference at Arnoldshain, Germany, last summer, on the subject of The Responsible Society in National and International Affairs. In the report of the group dealing with Social and Economic Affairs the following considerations were adopted regarding "the Bible and social decisions":

The Bible decisively illumines the minds and hearts of Christians as they face the problems of the social order. It does this because God through His revelation in the Bible frees man from fear and narrow loyalties which distort judgment. It does this because it reveals the true nature of the world under God as known in Christ and the true nature of man. When choices are most limited, and when a man needs above all courage and hope, and the realization of forgiveness, God's word in the Bible may lead directly to the most important political decisions, for example the decision to hold fast to the conviction that Christ is Lord above every government or other earthly power. In other situations, when more possibilities are open, when men may plan for the future and work for long-term constructive solutions, the Bible provides an ultimate source of judgment upon society, the general direction in which man should move, the basis for self-criticism and repentance.

It provides concrete judgments upon specific wrongs against humanity. It enables us to see all persons as loved of God and in the light of His purpose for them.

The Bible speaks to us through the revelation of God in Christ and not through specific texts taken out of the context of that revelation. It does not provide abstract concepts or specific laws by which we know what should be done under all situations; nor does its illumination take the place of scientific knowledge of the conditions under which we must act, or of rational analysis of the possibilities of action upon us.

A closed system of laws based upon biblical texts can be one of the most destructive types of ideology.

The Church and all Christians need to be open to truth from all sources. They should realize that Christian teaching has often been purified by the shock of events or by interaction with secular thought, but such purification depends finally upon a clearer understanding of the meaning of the central biblical revelation.

As we approach the specific problems of men to-day the Bible enables us to see the following:

It provides the basis for our understanding of the dignity of man as created in God's image. It reminds us that man was not made to be a slave of things or of institutions or of collectivities or of other men, but to be a free and responsible creature of God.

It enables us to understand sin in both economic injustice and in all systems which tend to reduce men to a sub-human existence.

God's solidarity with all men demonstrated in His becoming man in Christ is the basis for our responsibility for all our neighbours, of our responsibility to establish institutions and structures in society which are favourable to man's humanity, to just and meaningful personal relations, to responsibility in work, to the integrity of the whole life of man, in the factory, in his family, in his community, in his Church, and in all other social relationships. In the light of the biblical revelation we can best understand the many ways in which men become the victims of pride and the greed of other men, often of good men who are self-deceived, and that there is no pattern of institutions, no economic system which is secure against such injustice. Whatever external changes may come about in the political and economic order, there remains the need of perpetual renewal, both of men's spirit and of their institutions.

Inter-Bible Society Action

The Hungarian tragedy has shocked people throughout the world. Man has asserted himself against a deadly totalitarianism. But the country is in a state of desolation and the number of refugees increases daily. Governments, official and private organisations, have come to the rescue with money, goods and food. But the need for spiritual help is increasing. The churches are arranging for pastoral care and are planning for the production of basic church literature, hymn books in particular. They are, however, turning to the Bible Societies for Scriptures. The immediate need is for Scriptures for the refugees; but stocks ought also to be built up so that supplies can be sent into Hungary to meet the needs there as soon as communications re-open and transport becomes available. As already reported in this Bulletin, the Scriptures which the Hungarian Bible Council was allowed to produce last year were not sufficient to meet the needs inside Hungary.

Just as the free nations are taking a share in supplying material relief to the Hungarian refugees, so the Bible Societies of the world are co-operating in a common effort to provide an adequate supply of Scriptures in Hungarian.

The stocks in existence when the present emergency arose were limited and have quickly been exhausted. So far the American Bible Society, the British and Foreign Bible Society and the Swiss Bible Society have advanced the funds necessary for the production of:

200,000 Gospels (John and Luke)
50,000 New Testaments
25,000 Bibles

Several other Societies have announced their readiness to take a share in this effort.

The first supply of Gospels came off the press just before Christmas, in Switzerland. All orders for Gospels should be addressed to the Swiss Bible Society. The New Testaments and Bibles are being printed in Holland and Great Britain. The UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES is, at least for the time being, acting as the clearing house for all requests concerning these books.

In order to avoid overlapping, the U.B.S. will only deal with requests reaching it through the national Bible Society of a particular country. Any requests from individuals or other bodies which are received by the U.B.S. will first be cleared through the Society in the country from which the request comes.

Mr. Karl Uhl, B.F.B.S. representative in Vienna, has received the major part of the existing stocks of Hungarian Scriptures. He writes that "a large section of the Hungarian refugees are particularly eager to receive copies of God's Word". Many of them, especially the young people, have never possessed a Bible or a New Testament, or even seen a new one for years.

Audio-Visual Aid Notes

Filmstrips

The Director of the Stuttgart Bible Society, Dr. Emil Diehl, has sent the following account of Audio-Visual Aid materials produced by his Society:

The Stuttgart Bible Society has produced a number of filmstrips which are used widely at parish meetings, in schools, for Bible courses, etc. The following are among the black and white filmstrips most in demand:—

"*From the Bible of Jesus to the German Bible*"—a valuable documentary of 65 frames on the development of the Bible from the Hebrew Old Testament up to the German Bible of Martin Luther. The accompanying script was written by Prof. D. Herrmann, of the University of Münster. "*God's works in the history of the Bible*"—50 frames with a clear and lively script by a pastor of a parish in one of the large suburbs. "*Is the Bible authentic ? What do the papyrus and parchment manuscripts say ?*"—56 frames, with script by Pastor Fisch of Lübeck, former travelling secretary of the Union of German Bible Societies. "*The eternal Word*"—specially prepared for presentation in schools.

The Stuttgart Society has also some filmstrips in colour. "*Through the Palestine of Jesus*"—this filmstrip of 40 frames and the accompanying script by Prof. D. Foerster, University of Münster, describe a walk through Palestine and the audience is shown the features of the country and its inhabitants as they were at the time of Jesus. There are also three series of slides reproducing the illustrations of Rudolf Schäfer used in the Society's own illustrated Bible. There are three series of 22 pictures each, entitled: "Son of Man and Son of God", "The Word and Works of Jesus", and "Jesus' Suffering and Ascension".

Posters

A striking new poster has been produced by the Stuttgart Bible Society. The format is unusual, being approximately 8×25 ins. The design comprises three symbols: the Cross, with God's eye; the vault of heaven and the four corners of the earth, thus

presenting in various ways the idea of "above and below", "heaven and earth". In between, as the link between the two, stands the Word of God. This again is a symbol, in the form of the book.

The Bible in Schools Broadcasting

Broadcasting and television have been the subject of many conferences in recent years. Some of them have been sponsored by the World Committee for Christian Broadcasting, whose active agent in many parts of the world is the most competent Pastor H. W. v. Meyenn. He has stimulated broadcasting organisations to consider seriously the way in which religion is being broadcast, and he has brought together with persistent energy, those pastors who are working closely with broadcasting agencies.

The latest of the conferences to be reported has considered the whole field of schools broadcasting so far as it concerns religion—or more precisely, the Bible.

The conference was held in one of the evangelical academies, at Iserlohn, in Germany, which is specially devoted to the subject of broadcasting and television. Once again the World Committee for Christian Broadcasting has published the addresses* given at the conference, and they range over the whole field.

A good German article examining the whole philosophy of broadcasting to children has been written by Professor Ilse Peters of Düsseldorf. The question raised is whether this opportunity should be used to acquaint children with the basic principles of all religion, or whether it should be a kind of preparation for confirmation. Schools broadcasting can be as wide as all that.

In England there has been a good deal of experience in schools broadcasting, and for many years now there have been regular programmes on religion and philosophy. This would come under the first of the two alternatives proposed by Ilse Peters. The British Broadcasting Corporation, however, has also done a good deal of broadcasting of services to schools, and of Bible study.

The booklet, with its many articles, deals also with the question of religious drama. It is a pity that there was no representative from England among the writers (all are German) because more could have been said about the way in which biblical incidents are dramatised in the schools services from London, and how such dramatic features as "The Man Born to be King" have been used by children.

The book is a German book, and well worth reading for those who want to know something of what has been done in schools broadcasting with the Bible, and all the problems that this field of witness raises.

AVA Means and Methods

The following hints on AVA means and methods are taken from an article of D. W. Lomax, Audio-Visual Aid Secretary of the Church Missionary Society, and reproduced with the kind permission of "Overseas Education" (Vol. XXVIII, No. 3, October, 1956):

We have all benefited from that most widely used, but usually badly exploited aid, the blackboard. One American University has attempted to put this right by producing a filmstrip entitled "Making Your Chalk Teach".

The Christian Audio - Visual Centre, Tokyo, has just produced a booklet called 'Simple Visual Aids for

* " Die Bibel im Schulfunk " : Evangelische Akademie für Rundfunk und Fernsehen, Bethel/Bielefeld, Germany (*Price DMks. 4.80*)

Bible Story Telling'. These aids only cost time to produce, for the materials can be found in the waste-paper basket and the vegetable garden, but they can be made into puppets, paper graphs, marionettes, finger dolls and shadow picture sets.

Effective local chart production can be made easier by the use of an "Econasign" stencil outfit for the lettering, and pictorial work in several colours calls for silk screen printing. This is a technique which is little understood. A competent artist who understands the advantages and limitations of the process is required to design the picture and cut the stencils. "Profilm" for making the stencils is the answer to one of the main problems, which is the cutting of the stencil and its attachment to the silk screen. About £20 is necessary to buy the silk, make the wooden frame and obtain a supply of suitable paints, paper and solvent. Correctly used the silk screen process means that short runs of three-and four-colour posters can be economically produced.

A sequence of specially prepared drawings can be produced on large cards. Held in front of the audience and accompanied by a commentary, the top card is taken away and placed at the back, the second is removed in the same way, and this gives place to the third. The Americans call such a series a set of 'Flash Cards' and a number of sets on health subjects have been produced in India. The Japenese have improved on the idea by printing each card's commentary on the back of the card before. The user can stand facing his audience, and read off the commentary card by card without the audience realising where the script is concealed. The Japanese name is 'Kamishibai' or paper theatre, and with the Japanese flair for coloured drawings very effective religious sets have been prepared. Cards of this nature can be mounted on a roll of cloth or paper and attached to a couple of rollers that can be wound across a proscenium in a continuous band.

The flannelgraph idea is being adapted to many subjects and treatments. Starting with religious stories it has developed to maps, graphs, individual letters for building words and sentences, and even crosswords on a prepared background. It has been said that the flannelgraph technique has got everything that is usually associated with film: animation, colour, commentary and suspense. In fact, at the village level it has all the grip of a movie at a fraction of the cost.

Few people realise that projected visual aids are possible without electricity. This is done by means of the 'Keroscope' projector, which, using a 'Bialaddin' lantern as a light source, will show single and double frame filmstrips and 2-in. by 2-in. slides. The 'Keroscope' gained a bad reputation in its early days because it was supplied with an inferior lens. Users often attempt to show pictures projected on to a wall and to far too large groups of people. This projector is now fitted with a very efficient lens and it should always be used with a 4-foot 'Iris' silver screen. Used in this way, forty to fifty people can see a really bright picture under full blackout conditions. With its filmstrip removed this and other strip projectors are suitable for spot lighting a flannelgraph talk.

Recent developments in dry battery construction mean that 'all dry' radio sets with pick-up connections are available for use, not only as fully band-spread radio sets, but for amplifying gramophone records as well.

The Keroscope filmstrip and slide projector can be fitted with an electrical adapter in place of the Bialaddin pressure lantern. Using a 12v. 36w. lamp and a short thick

lead, it can be connected to the 12v. battery of your car and the 3 amp load is reasonable for subsequent recharging by the car. The picture will be about twice as bright as when working on kerosene.

The latest model V.I.S. projector uses a 12v. 24w. lamp and gives a good 4-foot picture on a silver screen. It is light in weight and low in cost and its 2 amp load is very easy on the battery. The only disadvantage of this projector is that it is for single frame filmstrips use only. Six-volt lamps are available for both this projector and the Keroscope. The light output will be the same as with the 12v. but the battery load is doubled.

Because simple movie films in colour are the nearest visual approach to reality when the right films and equipment are available, 16 mm. movie films have a great contribution to make from the simplest village level upwards. Films, like other visual aids, are not an end in themselves, but have a unique part to play in some aspects of communication.

The magnetic striped 16 mm. film has gone a long way to solving the problem of having a number of language versions available in a multi-lingual area. This advantage, coupled with the ability to take fresh recordings on the spot, opens up new fields overseas for movie films.

Since the war increasing attention has been given to the tropicalisation of amplifiers and other electronic equipment, but on the other hand little if anything has been done to safeguard the lenses of the projectors, cameras and other optical instruments. Tropical heat will act on the transparent cement binding together the several components of the camera lens and its transparency is soon obscured and the lens ruined. Protection and dehydration can be undertaken fairly easily and so expensive apparatus can be safeguarded, but just how to do this is little known and each year more and more apparatus is ruined. 'Silica-gel' air dryers are part of the answer.

Illustrations

In a circular to "the illustration artists of our time", both painters and engravers, the Committee on Illustration of the Evangelical Church in Hesse and Nassau (Germany) called on painters and engravers to support them in their efforts to make good pictures available for Protestant families, and to produce works which would enable the Church once more to become the patron of the arts. This however would only be possible if the artist again becomes familiar with the Bible.

"The artist of to-day no longer knows the Bible", writes Pastor Lothar Adam (Wiesbaden-Schierstein), in this connection. He states that the Committee has during recent months been looking for good pictures on biblical subjects, suitable for hanging on the walls in the homes of evangelical families, which could be reproduced and sold at travelling exhibitions. "The result makes one ashamed", continues Pastor Adam, "not because of the style—indeed, we are looking for modern syle paintings, as against the discarded forms of presentation of the 19th century—but on account of the content".

Personalia

The death, in his one hundredth year, is announced of the **Rev. Dr. Hugh C. Tucker,** formerly Secretary of the American Bible Society Agency in Brazil for 47 years. Dr. Tucker belonged to the group of great evangelical pioneers in Latin America, where he started as pastor of the American church in Rio de Janeiro in 1885. Besides his ministry with the Bible Society, Dr. Tucker played a leading part in promoting social legislation and action aiming at the improvement of the population's health and welfare in Brazil.

The A.B.S. announces with regret the resignation of **Dr. James V. Claypool,** who has served the Society for ten years as head of the department responsible for the use of the Bible. Dr. Claypool has been instrumental particularly in stimulating the participation of the churches in the World-Wide Bible Reading Campaigns sponsored each autumn by the A.B.S. Dr. Claypool is now in charge of Trinity Methodist Church in New Bedford (Mass.).

As from January 1st of this year the **Rev. Dr. Eric M. North** retired as an executive officer of the American Bible Society and has been appointed Consultant and Recording Secretary. Dr. North expects to continue much the same kind of work that he has been doing in studying the problems and programmes of the Society and working on special projects, without, however, carrying on direct administrative or executive responsibility.

The **Rev. James M. Roe,** Bible Society Secretary in Cairo, has been appointed Editorial Secretary of the British and Foreign Bible Society in the place of the Rev. J. E. Fenn, whose resignation was referred to in the last issue of the BULLETIN. Prior to his almost four years' service in Egypt, Mr. Roe had spent four years as Bible Society Secretary in Algiers.

The A.B.S. has appointed **Dr. James Z. Nettinga,** A.B.S. Secretary for the Southern California District, as Secretary of the Department for Educational Publicity. Dr. Nettinga has been serving the Society since 1949.

The **Rev. Dr. A. H. O'Neil,** General Secretary of the B.F.B.S. in Canada, has resigned from the post he has occupied for the past four years. Dr. O'Neil has been elected Bishop of Fredericton, N.B., Canada. His successor in the Bible Society is the **Rev. Kenneth G. McMillan,** B.A., B.D., who at present is minister of the Presbyterian Church of St. Andrew, Guelph, Ontario. He expects to take up his duties in the New Year.

Contributors to this Issue

THE REV. DR. N. J. COCKBURN is a General Secretary of the B.F.B.S., responsible for the work of the Society in Latin America, among other fields.

MR. T. HUDSPITH is Assistant Secretary of the Joint B.F.B.S./A.B.S Agency for Chile and Bolivia.

MR. J. H. TWENTYMAN is Secretary of the Joint B.F.B.S./A.B.S. Agency for Peru and Ecuador.

THE REV. KENNETH BYSTROM is Secretary of the Joint B.F.B.S./A.B.S. Agency for Colombia and Venezuela.

MR. J. W. LIMKEMANN is Secretary of the Central American Agency of the A.B.S.

THE REV. DAVID C. BRACKENRIDGE has just retired as Secretary of the Joint B.F.B.S./A.B.S. Agency for Chile and Bolivia.

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THE REV. DR. WM. C. SOMERVILLE is General Secretary of the National Bible Society of Scotland and a Vice-Chairman of the United Bible Societies.